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ABSTRACT

This document on the links between the world of work and the world of vocational training in the Netherlands includes 5 chapters, a list of abbreviations, and a 42-item reference list. Chapter 1 introduces the report. Chapter 2 outlines the Dutch system of industrial relations and presents the concept of "neocorporatism." Chapter 3 identifies national developments that are relevant to employers, employer organizations, and trade unions (the social partners) in relationship to vocational education. Chapter 4 analyzes the degree to which national-level agreements are followed by agreements on the sector and enterprise level and includes examples from the metal and electrotechnical engineering industry, the building industry, and banking. Chapter 5 summarizes the report with 10 developments at the national level, 5 at the local level, and 7 areas of conflict. The national developments include the rise of direct technocratic advising, access of social partners to decision-making circuits with respect to education, decentralization within the trade unions, integration and professionalization of the employers' organizations, changes in the power relations between trade union and employers' organizations, the socioeconomic crisis as a background for consensus between the social partners on the central level, and appeasement through vocational training. (CML)

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Social partners and vocational education in the Netherlands

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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Social partners and vocational education in the Netherlands

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Foreword

This study is one of a series of 12 monographs on the situation in the EC Member States. Through an analysis of existing and historical structures governing cooperation and coordination between the social partners and the public bodies responsible for vocational education and training (excluding general secondary education and university education), it was intended:

a) to carry out an in-depth investigation of the situation commencing with the central regulatory instruments and decision-making levels. These investigations were to examine the situation at regional, local and enterprise levels as well as in industrial sectors in EC Member States, and

b) to develop proposals for the contents and objectives of an improved social dialogue at the various levels.

The reports comprise two sections: a general analysis and a sectoral analysis.

Although the general analysis was, as far as possible, to be reinforced by the sectoral analysis, the two were to be complementary, whereas the conclusions were to be directed more towards objective (b).

The general analysis of the historical development, institutional involvement and problem areas was also to include a

description of the current situation with regard to the links between the world of work (employees, employers, industrial sectors and enterprises) and the world of vocational training (in-company, inter company/group training, school-based training - both initial and continuing - private, public and independent vocational training sponsors).

Furthermore, attention was to focus on the degree and nature of the involvement of the social partners in the development, implementation, administration and control of training policy programmes, including the extent and nature of state intervention within the framework of this involvement. The following aspects were to be included:

- analysis of legal regulations and collective framework agreements (education, labour market and social legislation, nature and extent of the autonomous powers of the social partners in the field of vocational training as specified in general collective agreements, sectoral agreements and typical enterprise-related agreements), and

- investigation of the problems relating to existing cooperative approaches to vocational training, particularly with a view to the equal distribution of training provision amongst various target groups (women, young people, adults, early school leavers, foreigners, etc.) and amongst the various regions and sectors, and finally

- description of the different methods of state intervention aimed at promoting the social dialogue on the basis of selected situations and regions or sectors.

In order to illustrate and give a realistic description of the existing situation, the nature and extent of cooperation amongst the social partners and government bodies were to be analysed in three sectors:

- in a sector dominated by small and medium enterprises or craft industries, e.g. the construction sector;

- in a sector characterized by modern industrial technology, e.g. the metal or electronics industries, and

- in a sector in which services and the employment of female labour are predominant, e.g. banks and insurance companies.

In these sectors the intention was to analyse and compare work-place, employment and occupational structures (hierarchy) in specific areas in which appropriate data were available. The aim was to identify any differences in the social relationships between employees and employers, and to evaluate the involvement and participation of employees and their organizations in initial and continuing vocational training activities, including any eventual implications for career advancement.

The sectoral analysis was intended to illustrate the more general analyses and assessments, and to substantiate and supplement the findings with concrete descriptions. In this connection, the intention was not to carry out case studies but rather to evaluate existing studies and collective agreements between the social partners in respect of initial and continuing vocational training.

The research work was usually accompanied at national level by individual ad hoc meetings between the institute(s) under contract and the three Management Board members from the respective country, and at EC level by regular discussions organized by CEDEFOP and the contractual partners from other Member States.

The investigation covered a period of seven months. In the second half of 1986, the studies were carried out in Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom and they were concluded in early 1987. The studies in the other Member States were conducted in the course of 1987. A synthesis report to be prepared on the basis of the twelve country reports, will attempt to collate systematically the most important conclusions, common trends and results in order to promote the dialogue between those concerned both in the Member States and at EC level.

The individuals, independent scientists and scientific institutes under contract were, of course, free to adapt the set outline for all twelve investigations to the prevailing

conditions and existing institutional framework in their respective countries.

On behalf of the authors, too, I should like to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the CEDEFOP Management Board from the respective Member States and to the numerous experts and individuals from the enterprises, training and other bodies, and to employers' and trade union organizations for their support in this work. We hope that this investigation will help to promote better and constructive understanding, despite the existence of very different interests, and thus lead to satisfactory solutions to the prevailing problems facing the development of initial and continuing vocational training. Thanks are also extended to the team of authors for the fruitful and successful cooperation on what was certainly not an easy subject for investigation.

B. Sellin
Project Coordinator

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Structure, form and contents of vocational education and training are continuously developing and under discussion. At present the socio-economic crisis and new technological developments provide serious challenges. However, the responses by the vocational education system are framed and conditioned by its own history, its structure and position in society. Different interests of societal actors are making themselves felt in this process. Given the relevance of vocational educational for employment, not only the state and those directly involved in the educational system, but also employers and employees (and their organizations) have every interest in influencing its structure and contents. While there is not much research into the actual role of the 'social partners' in this respect, there are many indications that their role is growing, at least as far as visible from the developments in the existing formal institutions.

CEDEFOP has therefore initiated a programme of research, in order to improve knowledge about the role of the social partners with respect to vocational education. The research focuses on an analysis of the institutions that structure the cooperation and coordination between social partners and those public agencies that deal with vocational education. The latter is defined in a broad sense, and includes, besides 'regular' vocational education, also vocational training and courses that form part of job related adult education.

CEDEFOP's research programme has three stages:

1. An in-depth study in EC Member States of the major decision making levels and regulating instruments. This study will be undertaken at the regional, local and sector/branch level.

2. The development of a series of methods and procedures to intensify and improve the 'social dialogue' on initial and further vocational education.

3. The development of proposals for the improvement of the social dialogue on different levels that could lead to initiatives by EC institutions.

As part of the first phase of the research programme CEDEFOP has started pilot projects in seven countries (Belgium, Denmark, France, FRG, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK). The Dutch study has been undertaken by the Institute for Social and Behavioral Studies (ITS) in collaboration with the department for Administration and Policy of the Catholic University Nijmegen.

Hardly any research has been done in the Netherlands on the questions that are of interest to CEDEFOP. Because the subject matter concerned here is very complex, however, we have followed a very selective procedure in this study.
In close consultation with CEDEFOP and the other six national research teams the study has focused on developments at the national level and in three industrial sectors: building industry, metal and electrotechnical industry and banking. We have collected and analysed written documents (including the few research reports that were available) and have interviewed a number of key persons in the field. The study has been restricted basically to vocational education and training for qualified (or skilled) workers and employees. This report has therefore no pretention to cover the whole field of vocational education.
In Chapter 2 we will outline the most important actors in the Dutch system of industrial relations. The working hypothesis of the study is redefined in research questions.
We also present our concept of 'neo-corporatism' which forms the heuristic framework for our study. Chapter 3 deals with national developments that are relevant to the role of social partners with respect to vocational education, especially within the system of industrial relations. Chapter 4 analyses the degree to which national level agreements are followed up by agreements on sector and enterprise level. Ilustrations will be given from the three sectors studied by us in detail. Chapter 5 contains a first evaluation of the role of social partners. This evaluation is made in terms of the model of neo-corporatism that was developed in the first chapter and also includes an analysis of the major substantial fields of conflict that are - or will become - manifest in the social dialogue between social partners about vocational education.

CHAPTER 2 - THE DUTCH SYSTEM OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS SHORT DESCRIPTION AND HEURISTIC FRAMEWORK.

As an introduction, we will first present a short outline of the most important actors in the system of industrial relations and some crucial developments and events of the past 15 years (2.1.). Next we will deal with neo-corporatism as a heuristic guideline for this study, and the CEDEFOP working hypothesis will be translated into the specific research questions, which were the main issues of this study.

2.1. Actors and events

In terms of structure, the Dutch system of industrial relations is traditionally characterized by pluralism: all parties act in plural. One of the main reasons for this is the compartmentalization ('verzuiling' - literally: 'pillarization') which has dominated Dutch society for a long time. 'Verzuiling' refers to the typically Dutch phenomenon of the division of the population into different categories according to religious or ideological backgrounds. Each of these categories has its own social organization in the field of health care, education, welfare work, economy and politics. The result is a sort of horizontal segmentation of Dutch society (Van Hoof and Van Wieringen, 1986). Even now, clear signs of this form of social structure are still visible, be it more clearly in some sectors of society (such as education, with its various representative umbrella organizations) than in others (such as the socia-economic sector, where the differences were blurred during the sixties and seventies as a result of processes of secularization and democratization). It is still possible to trace the influence of 'verzuiling' in the way in which the actors in Dutch industrial relations are organized.
Within the employers' camp there are also organizational divisions along sectoral lines or following the dimension of size: large-scale, medium-sized and small companies. The way in which union members are organized - besides by denominational background - within the unions follows divisions between sectors of industry, sometimes traversing

sectors (the industrial unions), sometimes per sector (the grafics union), and sometimes strictly per occupation or profession (e.g. journalists).

2.1.1. The major actors in Dutch labour relations

We will introduce the main actors in Dutch industrial relations without specifically going into the different employers' organizations and trade unions at sector level. Other relevant actors in vocational education, especially the 'educational field' and the Ministry of Education and Sciences will be dealt with in Chapter 3.

Employers' Organizations

The most important employers' organization is the Federation of Dutch Industry (VNO), founded in 1968 after a merger of two separate organizations with a 'business' and a 'social' function rescpectively. Its Christian pendant is the Dutch Christian Employers' Federation (NCW). Together they organise about 90 % of the (larger) enterprises in the non-agrarian, private sector. Both organizations include large individual enterprises such as Philips and Unilever. The largest members of the VNO are one of the sector organizations, the Federation of Metal and Electrical Industries (FME), and the General Organization of Employers (AWV). The FME, with around 1,200 member-enterprises in metal and electrical industries, acts as a partner in negotiations on collective labour agreements (CAO's); the AWV does not, it only offers support as a multi-sectoral umbrella organization and advises its own members (some 350 individual companies and almost 40 branch organizations). Medium and small enterprises are organised by the KNOV (neutral) and the NCOV (Christian). These two organizations include about 35 - 40 % of such enterprises as their members. In the agrarian sector there are three organizations, neutral (KNLC), Catholic (KNBTB) and Protestant (NCBTB); together they organise about 80 % of all farmers.

In 1980 the Council of Central Employers' Organizations (RCO) was founded in which all these employers' organizations take part.

Trade Unions

Trade Unions are also organised in a pluriform way: there are three federations and a fourth category of trade unions. The largest federation is het FNV (neutral), in existence since 1981 after a merger between the social-democratic NVV and the Catholic NKV. The FNV organises about 60 % of all unionized workers (over 900,000 members at the beginning of 1987) but their membership shows a slow decline. The Christian CNV has existed since 1909 and has long had a Protestant signature but during recent years the Catholic share of its membership has increased. Now, it organises about 20 % of all union members (almost 300,000 in 1987).

The largest trade unions affiliated to the FNV are the Union of Civil Servants (ABVA-KABO, around 245,000 members), the Industrial Union FNV (approx. 205,000 members), the Services Union FNV (some 65,000 members), the Transport Union FNV (around 60,000 members), the FNV Union for Food Industries (around 50,000 members), the Graphics Union (Print and Paper, some 44,000 members) and the Teachers Union (ABOP, around 42,000 members).

The largest trade unions affiliated to the CNV are the Union of Civil Servants (CFO, approx. 80,000 members), the CNV Industrial Union (includes food industries; around 50,000 members), the Union for Teaching Staff (KOV, with around 40,000 members) and the CNV Union for Construction Industries (approx. 40,000 members).

As a reaction to the wage policies of NVV and NKV during the 1970s aimed at leveling wage differences, in 1975 the MHP, a loosely organised federation of organizations of staff and higher managers was founded, that now has about 7 % of all union members. The fourth category of unions consists of both sydicalist and more 'liberal' types of unions that are not affiliated with one of the other three federations. Approximately 15 % of union members is organised by such unions.

Government

The third 'social partner' in industrial relations, the government, is also present with various actors. Basically, for different issues and different cases, the government is represented by different Ministries. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SOZAWE) is

responsible for social security, quality of work and employment, but the Ministry of Domestic Affairs as employer of civil servants and the Ministries of Economic, Financial and General Affairs (the office of the Prime Minister) all play an important role in policy making and negotiations with employers and trade unions. The role of the Ministry of Education and Sciences will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Institutions

After World War II two institutions for cooperation between parties in industrial relations were created, the Labour Foundation (1945) and the Social and Economic Council (SER, 1950). Especially the latter gradually came to play an 'independent' role. The Foundation is the top organ of industry and the major meeting point of the RCO and the trade union federations. SER is the institution in which the government is obliged by law to ask the advice of employers and trade unions in matters of social economic policy. Its composition is based on a tripartite division, with 15 seats each for employers and trade unions, and another 15 seats for independent experts, such as the President of the National Bank.
During the 1970s a number of more specialised advisory committees were established that now 'compete' with the SER. Among such committees are the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), and the Arboraad, a council which advises on the implementation of the Working Conditions Act (Wet op de Arbeidsomstandigheden).

This concludes our review of the main institutions at national level. Their function is mainly an advisory and guiding one: the SER towards the government especially, as advice given by the SER is not binding, the Labour Foundation towards the members of the central employers' organizations and Trade Unions (organizations at sector level). Agreements reached within the Foundation are not binding to the negotiation partners at the level of collective labour agreements: at the most they indicate frameworks and have the status of recommendations, but do not prescribe the contents of the collective labour agreements to be concluded. This is done by the sectoral employers' unions (branch CAO's) and companies (company CAO's) on the one hand who are affiliated with the central employers' organizations

and the trade unions affiliated with the respective Trade Union Federations on the other hand.

2.1.2. Social-political development: The period 1972 - 1987

A number of developments and events from this period are relevant for an understanding of our analysis.

Government Den Uyl 1973 - 1977

The centre-left coalition government led by the social-democrat Den Uyl supported the policies of the unions at the time to redistribute incomes, capital, knowledge and power in society. However, in its first year of office it was confronted with the consequences of the first oil crisis and had to make a start with the reduction of public expenditure.

Economic crisis and crisis of the Welfare State

The economic crisis that started in the beginning of the 1970s can be illustrated by a number of figures. Registered unemployment reached more than 822,000 people, which is more than 17 % of all wage earners. Nett-national income increased only insignificantly and even decreased between 1980 and 1984: the labourincome quote went up to 91 % in 1981 but gradually decreased again afterwards. Collective expenditure went up enormously and in 1983 the state's budget deficit was 9,5 % of total nett national incomes.

Trade union policies

The trade unions were increasingly pushed into the defensive from the middle of the seventies on, due both to the strong resistance of employers towards any union claims and the restrictive policy of the government who was cutting (civil servants') salaries as well as its welfare policies. The reduction of working hours became one of the priorities from 1979 on, but did not reslult in many new jobs.
The position of the trade unions has become much weaker. Naturally, the very high level of unemployment contributed considerably as did the dramatic loss of members. From 1980 to 1984, union membership fell

from 39 % to 30 %, in absolute figures from 1,790,000 to 1,583,000 members. Furthermore, discussion increased between federations (the rise of the MHP) as well as within federations (tension between the Civil Servants Union and unions in the commercial sector etc). Recently the level of union membership has gradually started to grow again.

The policies and position of employers' organizations

The employers' organizations closed ranks in the 1970s in their resistance against the unions who, in their 'radical' period (1969 - 1973) attempted to realise their 'leveling' policies by (for Dutch conditions) rather tough means of action, and against the government led by Den Uyl who supported this policy. When this government was succeeded by more employer-friendly governments, closer cooperation developed between employers' organizations and these governments. The most striking trend is that employers and their organizations are becoming more powerful. Internally, the coordination of policy making has been improved and professionalized considerably. Externally employers' organizations have obviously profited from the weaker position of the trade unions.

Governments led by Van Agt and Lubbers, 1977 - now

The centre-right governments led by Van Agt that followed Den Uyl tried to realise economic recovery by cutting public expenditure and restoring profits in the private sector. This policy was continued by the governments led by Lubbers after 1982. Three policy aims heve become central: lowering budget deficits, strengthening the market sector, and redistribution of work.

Although the system of central wage policy was abandoned formally in 1963, the government continued to intervene in wages. Since 1982 however, the government has increasinghly withdrawn form industrial relations in general and wage policies in particular. This change was confimed by the recommendations of the Labour Foundation in November 1982. We shall return to these issues later.

2.2. Analysis of the 'social dialogue' in terms of neo-corporatism

From CEDEFOP's documents it is clear that the role of the social partners in vocational education and training should not only be studied by measuring the influence of partners acting separately from each other ('the autonomous powers of the social partners', CEDEFOP, 1986: 3). More important is the 'social dialogue'. This concept is described in a number of ways: 'cooperation and coordination between the social partners and the public bodies' (o.c.: 1), 'the involvement of the social partners' and 'the existing cooperative approaches' (o.c.: 3) and 'social relationship' and 'participation', in short: 'cooperation between the social partners and government bodies' (o.c.: 4).

At this stage we have decided to study this social dialogue not so much through measuring the influence of the social partners, but by analysing it as a form of neo-corporatism. This, we hope, will give us an opportunity to get a better view on the total pattern of relationships between the partners involved in vocational education. We shall look more in detail at the functioning of institutions for consultation and cooperation, participation in such institutions by the social partners and other interest groups, the number of agreemments that have been concluded, their contents as well as their future prospects.

2.2.1. The concept of neo-corporatism

Neo-corporatism refers to a socio-economic system governed by a parliamentary government in cooperation with social partners (i.e. employers' organizations and trade unions), which generates central agreements to be realised and implemented by the social partners themselves at the level of industrial sectors or branches and enterprises.

Neo-corporatism in this sense is much of an ideal concept and as such diametrically opposed to a liberal or open-conflict model of

socioeconomic relations. The concept as used by us in fact describes two variants of the neo-corporatist model: one, in which the intervention of private interest organizations in public policy is stressed (the so-called interest-group democracy), and another in which the emphasis is laid on state intervention in the work of private organizations. However, while the borderlines between interest organizations and the state are formally easy to define, in practice there are many interconnection, through informal networks and the like, which does not always make it easy to distinguish the two clearly.

Why do we use neo-corporatism as the central concept for sudying the 'social dialogue' around vocational education in the Netherlands? There are a number of reasons:

- The concept has been very well elaborated in the literature on political science and industrial relations (Akkermans, 1983; Harrison, 1984; Gerlich et al., 1985; one could almost speak of a 'school of thought' after the publication of Schmitter and Lembruch, 1979), and the concept has proved especially useful for analysing Dutch industrial relations (Akkermans and Grootings, 1977).

- While industrial relations and the educational system have been researched thoroughly as separate systems, their interrelationships have not. And despite a growing interest in the topic (Hövels, 1985) there has been no systematic study in the Netherlands of the role of the industrial relations partners in vocational education. Some partial information has been collected, though, in a number of branch studies, like Kayzel's on the printing industry (1985a), or in studies dealing with specific types of vocational education, like the apprenticeship system (Hövels, 1985b; Hövels and Verijdt, 1987). A more comprehensive study like the one envisaged here would, however, need a more explicit conceptual framework.

- The literature dealing with Dutch socio-economic relations and policies frequently speaks of their highly corporatist character (Windmuller, 1970; Wilenski, 1981). While such a description would in fact need some modifications, we do think that the concept as

such has great heuristic value for an analysis of the Dutch situation (Reynaerts, 1983; Albeda, 1986).

- In the debate on neo-corporatism, however, no attention has been paid so far to vocational education (see for an exception Cawson, 1982). It has mainly concentrated on issues like wage and income policy, social security etc. Only very recently have Van Hoof and Van Wieringen (1986) established a link, although these authors have defined corporatism too much in terms of 'verzuiling' as a traditional characteristic of Dutch societey.

The concept seems worthy of further application, but we are aware of the fact that its theoretical and empirical status is rather controversial. As a political dogma, corporatism has a bad history and is associated in its traditional form with fascism. The concepts of neo-corporatism and classical corporatism merely share the principle of 'subsidiarity': tasks of the state are transmitted to or taken over by private organizations which receive, in turn, semi-public status. The principal issue at stake is the osmosis between state and society, between politics and economy, taking place in this intermediate sphere

It has to be stressed once again that the concept of neo-corporatism has a purely heuristic function in this study. It should not be interpreted as a priori suggesting an empirical description of reality, nor does it imply any kind of normative position.

2.2.2. Principal elements of a neo-corporatist model

One may distinguish six principal elements of the neo-corporatist model:

1. A strong propensity towards dialogue, consultation, avoidance of conflicts and participation. A central place is taken by the (real or assumed) general or national interest.

2. The dialogue takes place in specially created institutions or platforms. Classical Dutch examples are the Social Economic Council (SER) and the Labour Foundation (Stichting van de Arbeid). In as far as vocational education is concerned, a new body of consultation was established recently: the OOVO (Consultation body for secondary education). We will return to this later.

3. Within this institutional framework a very specific network of actors is operating: employers (organizations), workers (organizations), the state (Ministries) and in Dutch vocational education, the 'educational field' (especially the previously mentioned umbrella organizations).

4. The interaction between these social partners and the overall functioning of the system can be considered to be a process in which different types of 'barters' or 'trade-offs' take place.

5. The system is national and assumes that agreements concluded at the central (= national) level will be realised at lower levels: region, branch and firm.

6. In order to function properly the system therefore needs a transmission mechansism. Industrial relations, for example, have to be considerably centralised to guarantee that trade unions can 'enforce' central agreements. The same is true for employers and the state. In the Dutch case this refers to the importance of the relations between the confederations of unions (CNV, FNV) and their affiliated unions, and between the Employers' Confederations (VNO, NCW and AWV) and their affiliated organizations. It is important to know in this respect that central agreements reached in the Labour Foundation only have the status of recommendations for the individual unions and employers' organizations involved in collective bargaining at the branch or firm levels. It is also important to know that the Law on the Works Councils does not allow works councils to intervene in the traditional domain of collective bargaining, which is done by employers (organizations) and trade unions.

2.2.3. Formulation of the working hypothesis and research questions

In applying the concept of neo-corporatism in this study to the role of social partners with respect to vocational education, the procedure will be to 'test' the concept, that is to say to see to which extent reality conforms with its theoretical contents. One can expect that in reality divergencies from the ideal type will exist in all six elements that were distinguished in the previous paragraph:
1) consensus may be weak, 2) the institutions for consultation may be ignored, 3) changes in the composition of the central networks may occur, 4) the state may avoid a trade-off policy, 5) agreements are made only infrequently and, finally, 6) the transfer to lower levels does not work, for instance because of the failure of traditional transmission mechanisms.
Our working hypothesis will be that in the Netherlands there is a perfect neo-corporatist type of relations in the dialogue between social partners concerning vocational education.

We have translated the general problem of our study into three more specific research questions:

1. Which the structures determine the cooperation between social partners in vocational education, and which significant developments are taking place?

2. To what extent are agreements reached between the social partners on the different levels (national, regional/local, branch and enterprise), and what are the relevant transfer mechanisms that operate between these levels?

3. What are the results of the involvement of the social partners in vocational education in terms of volume and structure of educational institutions and which target groups do they reach?

CHAPTER 3 - NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

One can only understand the actual role of social partners with respect to vocational education if this is placed against its historical development, but other aspects are also important. Certainly in the Netherlands, with its traditional emphasis on full-time daytime education, very academically oriented, relationships with respect to control and authority play an important role. Other parties in vocational education are concerned here, mainly the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the 'educational field'. The 'educational field' is represented by school boards, teachers' and parents' organizations, each - in accordance with the Dutch tendency for social compartmentalization - still) based on a certain religious or ideological persuasion. There are three umbrella organizations, one Catholic, one Protestant and one non-denomonational, consisting of school board, teachers' and parents' organizations and representing these forms of education respectively. They exert a lot of inluence on national educational policy, not only through Parliment, but also in institutionalized consultations with the Minster and by means of numerous advisory and planning tasks which are legally their responisibility. These umbrella organizations also run national agencies for educational guidance or are closely linked to them. The agencies are almost completely state subsidised and are represented in nearly all the national organizations involved with education, such as the agencies for curriculum development, assessment/certification development and educational research (Van Kemenade, 1981). This chapter starts off with a sketch of the developments in decision making and control, first in vocational education and secondly in industrial relations at the national level. This description forms the background for an analysis of relevant developments in vocational education since the beginning of the 1980s.

3.1. Decision making and control in vocational education

3.1.1. The relatively low impact of the social partners: a brief historical review

The Dutch educational system, and within it the system of vocational education was built up and developed especially by the Ministry of Education and Sciences during the past decade. Policy was undeniably influenced by various interest groups, but - just as undeniably - always left the people involved enough scope for their own interpretations. However, Parliament always had the final say, so that in this sense the question of who has control in educational matters is an easy one to answer formally. It becomes less easy if the issue is regarded in terms of influences on the policy of the Ministry and Chamber of Representatives.

During the period of post-war reconstruction until the end of the fifties, employers' organizations had quite a lot of influence on the design of education. Experts of employers' organizations were members of advisory committees for the Ministry of Educational and Sciences, such as the Goote Committee and the Faber-Hannequin Committee. The realization that the government should anticipate expected social, economic and technological developments in its educational policy ('constructive' educational policy) led to the involvement of industrial life in an advisory sense.
Besides pedagogical motives, these advisory committees were also led by plans made by the SER in 1957 towards generalization of vocational education, which were based on the expectation that automation of production processes would require wider basic skills and knowledge. Afterwards, the role of industrial life was taken over by the educational umbrella organizations. One typical instance was that the work of the aforementioned committees was taken up by three confessionally based study committees (resulting in the extension of the curriculum for lower technical education from two to three years, in 1964). In 1972 the gradual institutionalization of the increasing involvement of the educational field culminated in

the legal regulation of the influence of umbrella organizations, in the Central Commission for Educational Consultation (CCOO). There was (still) no place for the social partners within the formal structure of influence regarding educational policy, even today the umbrella organizations are the major consultation partners. The CCOO is still the most important advisory body of the Ministry of Education and Science. The employers' organizations and trade unions did not hold a seat until the mid-eighties, despite the fact that in 1975 the then (social-democratic) Minister of Education had already proposed to give representatives of the social partners a place in this central advisory body.

Given the relevance of education for employment, obviously also employers' organizations and unions want to have some influence on educational policies. Each confederation (especially NCW, KNOV, FNV and CNV) has its own staff department dealing with educational affairs. Since the late 1960s they have intensified their involvement in the government's educational policy, which before relied almost exclusively on advice of the educational umbrella organizations. Employers' organizations and trade unions have tried to formulate joint reactions to government papers and laws inside the existing socio-economic consultation bodies such as the Labour Foundation and the Commission for Education of the SER. From time to time they also publish their own policy documents like the one presented by VNO on the apprenticeship system (1980). Other documents dealt with the reform of secondary education, practice and probation periods, paid educational leave and adult education. Confederations of employers and unions often hold opposite views on major educational issues, with the result that consultations in the SER hardly ever exerted a strong influence on policy making (Leune, 1981). Leune concludes in this respect that 'while it is unclear through which mechanisms social values and interests penetrate in the decision making structures of the educational system', internal-educational pressure groups have had far more influence than external groups like employers and trade unions (o.c.). In this respect he is explicitly referring to the dominant role of the umbrella organizations.

At CAO level, vocational education or training was hardly a topic of bargaining until the 1980s. At this level employment issues and working conditions have dominated. The organizational structure of collective bargaining (branches and firms) also only partially overlaps with the structure of the educational system (types, directions and levels).
Moreover, educational policy - also regarding its vocational dimensions - has been considered for a long time as belonging to the central level with prime responsibility entrusted to the government. At the branch level employers' organizations and unions have only published their own separate papers on vocational education. In other words, the role - and certainly the influence - of social partners in educational policy has been very small. In practice their influence was restricted to individual schools and/or enterprises: through their participation in the governing boards of vocational schools and by creating practical training places.

3.1.2. The apprenticeship system as the exception

A clear exception on the tendency sketched so far is formed by the apprenticeship system. Immediately after the Second World War, and following an advice of the Labour Foundation, in almost all industrial branches central organizations were created for stimulating, developing and implementing apprenticeship systems. They developed gradually from a mere substitute of the former craftschool, today called lower technical school (LTS), into a full form of education for skilled workers. An apprenticeship can now be taken up after the completion of initial secondary education, especially LTS, and consists of an in-school part and an in-company part. Employers' organizations and trade unions have always remained very much involved in the system. Both parties are represented in the governing bodies of the national and regional organizations of the apprenticeship system and since 1981 also in the central affiliation of national apprenticeship bodies (COLO). The practical in-company part (the practical component) of apprenticeships is developed and controlled by a central institution (PCBB), and the

employers have also intensified their participation in the PCBB since 1981. Their policy is aimed at developing this body to a well equipped institution for the development of all vocational training and education in the Netherlands (VNO, 1981). Employers, of course, also have firm control over the practical part of the system at the level of the enterprise.
The dual structure of the system is also expressed in its dual legal regulation. The practical part is regulated by the Law on the Apprenticeship System; the school part by the Law on Further Education. As a consequence, responsibilities for the two components are distributed between employers and unions, on the one side, and state and national affiliations, on the other.

Although the apprenticeship system in the Netherlands is by far not as important as in countries like the Federal Republic of Germany (it is quantitatively not dominant and, moreover, only covers vocational education on the manual workers' level), it has been the focus of recent debates on educational policies.

3.1.3. The transformation of the eighties: towards joint responsibility

The concept of a dual vocational education has played an important role in the change that has taken place in the debate about vocational education in the Netherlands since the beginning of the 1980s. Especially the Wagner Commission, established to advise the Ministry of Economic Affairs on the development of an industrial policy and named after its chairman, has provoked discussions after its plea for a stronger involvement of industry in vocational education, based on the principles of the dual system. According to the Commission, the whole system of vocational education should become the joint responsibility of state, industry and educational organizations.

The opinion voiced by the Wagner Commission fitted well in a longer and more general debate about the future of education. This debate

has slowly moved away from its focus on social inequality as was the case in the 1960s - with individual development and equality of opportunity as the dominating educational values - towards more attention towards the preparation for the future job situation. Vocational education had been criticised for paying too little attention to this as early as the 1970s. Although at that time the issue of a stronger involvement of employers and unions in educational policy making had been raised, in a number of ministerial documents and by the Labour Foundation, the Wagner Commission's advice can be considered to be a turning point in this process. In its advice on vocational education, the Wagner Commission was unmistakably led by the German training model. The situation is made more complex, however, by the fact that - as is widely known - the Wagner Commission substantially based its advice on a document prepared by one of the higher civil servants of the Ministry of Education. This should indicate how difficult it is to trace initiative and decision making when formal and informal networks are so strongly interwoven.

In its second report of activities, the Wagner Commission devoted one chapter to vocational education, which has had considerable impact on policy making.

The Commission's recommendations especially concerned (the deliberation between social partners about) the expansion of the apprenticeship system; the development of measures to make the system less dependent on the state of the economy; the integration of the system with short senior secondary vocational education (short mbo) and the development of a dual structure for the whole system of vocational education, including senior secondary (mbo) and higher levels of vocational education (hbo). It was suggested that the state should share its responsibility with others, while staying responsible for the organization of education as well as for how the social partners shoud contribute.

The presentation of the Commission's views was followed by a period of so-called 'open consultations' in which the state, industry, unions and educational organizations took part and which lasted almost one year. Results of these consultations were reported in 1984. All parties accepted the principle of <u>joint responsibility</u> for

vocational education as the best way to ensure a good match between education and work. Many other suggestions were accepted and elaborated as well. A major point of divergence was the suggested introduction of a dual structure (following the apprenticeship system) for all vocational education. Such a system, also implying a two-phase structure (with schools responsible for the first phase and industry for the second), was rejected for mbo and hbo because (see Van Gijswijk, 1985):

- it would imply higher costs for industry;
- the system would become too sensitive to economic change;
- (young) workers would be replaced by students in the employment system;
- such a structure would be in conflict with actual developments in mbo and hbo (see further on).

No agreement could be reached about the relationship between the apprenticeship system and short mbo, the issues being whether the two systems should develop parallel to each other or as alternatives; whether one should follow the other in time or whether they should form another type of mixture.

3.1.4. An elaboration of joint responsibility for vocational education

The joint responsibility that was principally accepted was elaborated more concretely in four points, also accepted by the government:

a) a basic vocational qualification for everybody;
b) organization and planning of vocational education;
c) an increase in training places outside schools;
d) participation of industry and unions in educational consultations.

We shall discuss these points in more detail (see also Geurts, 1985).

A basic vocational qualification for everybody

All partners have accepted that all young people should be given a basic vocational education at the level of qualification provided by the apprenticeship system. This implies the creation of new vocational education opportunities for young people leaving lower vocational schools (lbo) and lower general secondary schools (mavo). Both types of schools are characterised by the fact that they do not end with a vocational qualification and their diplomas are of no value on the labour market: lbo is preparatory vocational education and mavo is general education. Such school leavers therefore run a high risk of becoming unemployed, Each year some 100,000 young people are concerned, relatively more boys than girls. About 75 % leave lbo and 25 % mavo; of this group one third drops out without any diploma. Moreover, both types of schools offer only few possibilities of further education (a structural problem of the present educational system).

The expansion of vocational education for these groups will follow two tracks: full-time school education (short mbo) and expansion of the apprenticeship system.

Short mbo is a relatively new type of vocational education, started in 1979 with some 1,200 students. In 1982/83 7,500 students followed short mbo courses and in 1986 30,000 are expected do so. That would mean an influx of some 15,000 new students. Short mbo has no entrance examinations and does not require lbo or mavo diplomas. It is a two-year course and the diploma should equal the level of the apprenticeship system. It is intended to combine short mbo schools with regular mbo schools (that do have entrance limitations) into so-called sector schools.

The second track consists, as said before, of a further development of the apprenticeship system and especially of its practical part. Since 1980 the educational capacity of the system decreased alarmingly, evoking a series of counter measures, among which a subsidy from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SOZAWE), the so-called BVJ measures. The parties involved in the Open Counsultation agreed to double the influx of apprentices quickly to 50,000 young people. Since 1984 in all (more than 30) sectors of the apprenticeship system (that almost run parallel with the CAO

structures), training funds have been created to develop the practical components. These funds are administered on a bilateral basis by employers' organizations and unions in each sector (condition laid down by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment to be eligible subsidies). Decisions on subsidies for individual employers who offer training places are taken autonomously. Besisdes the BVJ subsidies, the funds are provided in almost half of the cases by industry, usually a percentage of the wage sum agreed upon during collective bargaining. In 1986/87 the influx of apprentices increased by 50 per cent as compared with 1982/83.

As an employer in its own right, the government (i.e. the Ministry of Internal Affairs) has launched its own Youth Employment Scheme, aimed at stimulating the apprenticeship system and offering young people temporary jobs in combination with part-time education.

Organization and planning of vocational education

Industry has received co-responsibility for matters like:

- establishing job profiles;
- establishing training profiles, curricula and exams;
- rule making;
- modes of examination;
- planning of provisions;
- equipment.

In an attempt to improve the match between job demands and vocational education the Ministry of Education has issued a policy document with suggestions as to how to establish job profiles and training profiles in order to develop the curricula for vocational education as a whole (O&W, 1986). The document refers to the already existing procedures for the establishment of such profiles in consultations between social partners and representatives of the educational system: job profiles are to be established by the social partners and training profiles by the social partners and educational specialists at the branch level. Such a division of responsibilities existed already in the dual apprenticeship system, and it is an indication of the weight given to the dual system that

its procedures are being introduced in another context. Except for the apprenticeship system, the translation of these profiles into curricula is the final responsibility of educational experts. Social partners have accepted these suggestions.

Increase in the number of out-of-school training places

Dutch education has two types of out-of-school training. In full-time school education it takes place during a practical training period and in the dual system as part of the apprenticeship. The number of both types of training places should be increased. For the time being no legal regulations will be issued to reach a quantitatively sufficient number of external training places. Attempts to improve the situation will focus on the conditions under which employers are willing to employ apprentices and to provide practical training places for students.
With respect to the quality of such training places agreements have been made concerning the training of teachers, further education for consultants and new rules for the relations between the practical and school parts of vocational education.

Participation of industry and unions in consultations about education

At the national level industry has taken part in the newly esablished Consultation Body for Secondary Education (OOVO) since 1985 and - concerning vocational education - in the Central Commission for Educational Counsultation (CCOO). Also at the branch level - as requested by the government - a number of consultative institutions have been established, like Branch-level Consultation for Technical Education (BOTO's) mastered by a Sector-level Consultation for Technical Education (SOTO). One of the problems here was - and indeed still is - the appropriate definition of branches and sectors. Education makes the following distinction of sections: agricultural, technical, economic-administrative and service- and health education. Industry makes a more differentiated division, partly even cutting across the one made in education and depending on collective bargaining structures. Negotiations about bringing together bargaining structures and educational sectors have recently led to the definition of 15-20 areas for educational

consultation. Another major problem is the question of who exactly should be representing the educational field in these branch consultations (actually a dispute about the position of the traditionally powerful umbrella organizations)

3.2. Developments in the Industrial Relations System

3.2.1. Industrial Relations in the Netherlands: a brief historical review

In the course of the 'reconstruction' of the country after the Second World War an extensive and highly institutionalised system of industrial relations was developed, in which the Labour Foundation became the central institution for national consultations between employers' organizations and the unions. With the establishment of the Labour Foundation the unions gave up any claims for workers' involvment in enterprise management in exchange for equal representation in official advisory committees. The legal introduction in 1950 of the works councils was also completely separated from the trade unions' organizational structures and heavily integrated in a neo-corporatist structure. The Social Economic Council (SER) became the centreal socioeconomic advisory body for the government.

Besides its consensual nature, the Dutch industrial relations system has been said to have a high degree of centralization and the important role of the state as its basic characteristics (Windmuller, 1979). At the end of the 1960s the system began to undergo some change: it became more conflictive and less centralised. Also the central wage policy was - at least formally - abandoned.
After 1973 the central organizations in the Labour Foundation were not able to conclude any collective agreements. This deadlock lasted a number of years. At the branch level the unions negotiated their own collective agreements. Reynaerts (1983) speaks of this period as one in which the integrative trend of consensus was displaced by the

dispersive trend of power. Conflicts of interests in the 1970s affected the distribution of power and control in society and in the firms, each party taking opposite stands. It was in this period that trade unions strengthened their organizational structures at the enterprise level and that - probably as a reaction to this - in 1971 and 1979 the legal powers of the works council were broadened. However, the distribution of responsibilities between works councils and trade unions, especially concerning collective bargaining, was explicitly maintained. After the second oil crisis at the end of the 1970s this conflictive development came to a halt and first signs of the revival of a cooperative type of regulation appeared. General economic problems, perceived by many as a threat to their welfare, labour market problems both in the private and in the public sector, changes in political relations - all generated a 'society with a broken perspective' (Reynaerts, o.c.).

The growing awareness of the economic crisis and an increased willingness to accept a reduction in income signalled the beginning of the social acceptance of policies directed at economic recovery. Obviously the position of employers' organizations improved considerably, backed up by high unemployment levels but also by improvements in their own internal organizational structures. Improved coordination between employers was also strengthened by their own reaction to the radicalization of the unions in the 1970s (Akkermans, 1985; Nobelen, 1983).

Within the trade union movement an opposite development had occurred, manifested mainly by weaker relations between central and lower levels of the organization. The trade unions found themselves gradually manoeuvered into a defensive position. They were forced to accept policies that had - at least in the short term - negative consequences on employment, indicated by the fact that unions suffered considerable membership losses. The combined effect of many factors therefore decreased the potential influence of the unions on political decision making. Part of this development is also reflected by a shift in trade union policy: from wages to employment issues. In 1982 the first central agreement reached in the Labour Foundation after nine years was about the very employment situation. It contained a request by the central organizations to the parties

in collective bargaining - at the branch and firm levels - to try to negotiate (without government interference) about improving the financial situation of firms, on the one hand, and a better distribution of jobs, on the other. It was suggested that the bargaining parties involved concentrated their negotiations on long-term packages containing different forms of redistributing employment, like the reduction of working time, part-time jobs, measures against youth unemployment without leading to an increase of labour costs for the firms.

The government, who supported this central agreement, reconfirmed that in future it would abstain from direct intervention in collective bargaining. This clearly shows a change in thinking about the role of the state, following a growing scepticism towards traditional political mechanisms like state planning and regulation.

The 1982 Agreement marks a clear turning point in the socio-economic arena that is not without relevance for the role of social partners in vocational education. As was the case with the Wagner Commission, however, here too it is difficult to trace which influences and actors were decisive and whether 1982 really was the most relevant event.

To conclude, we can summarise the major developments in the system of industrial relations as follows (see also OSA, 1985).

- decentralization, down to the level of industrial enterprises;
- decrease of direct state intervention: deregulation. The state becomes a third partner rather than the central power controlling employers' organizations and unions and interfering on all levels;
- broadening the scope for collective bargaining to include not only wage issues but also matters concerning employment and social security.

3.2.2. Implications of the central agreement of 1982

The central agreement reached in November 1982 in the Labour Foundation marked the start of a new phase in the role of the social partners, and also retained its value in the following years. In 1984 and 1986 the agreement was extended with a number of recommendations for the parties engaged in collective bargaining on such issues as economic growth, further redistribution of work and the solution of labour market problems. More specifically, the 1982 Agreement suggested to the collective bargaining parties that, to achieve economic recovery and an improved employment situation, it was necessary to improve the firms' financial situation and also to distribute existing employment in a different way. In other words, the suggestion was that trade unions should give in on wage demands in exchange for a (committed form of) participation of employers in the redistribution of employment.

The Agreement does not explicitly mention an improvement of the relation between vocational education and work. However, in its further elaboration, both at the national and at the branch level of collective agreements, vocational education has gradually taken a central place. This is especially the case for various types of retraining and further education, both within the framework of youth employment programmes and in permanent education for adults.

The biggest conflict was fought over the introduction of a general reduction of working hours and this conflict has still not been settled. In 1986, either a shorter working week (usually 38 hours) or additional free days were introduced for eight out of ten employees in the Netherlands. This is mainly the case for workers and employees in the larger firms, smaller firms have not done very much in terms of shortening working hours (Volkskrant, 30 January, 1987). A more radical reduction of working hours still meets with strong employers' resistance. Against this background matters concerning training and education are the ones about which at present agreements can be reached more easily. The 1982 Agreement expressed the wish that its recommendations should form the basis for collective bargaining in 1983. The Agreement also contained an appeal to the government to make it possible for CAO parties to

negotiate freely on the basis of the Foundations' suggestions, amongst others about different use of previously made wage agreements. The government responded with a special law of December 1982 creating the possibilities to do so. The law enabled the bargaining parties to include, in the new negotiations, wage agreements established earlier in order to be able to realise the policy recommended by the Foundation. The law again indicates a changing role of the state in the social economic arena: instead of regulating it, it now creates conditions for the social partners to act.

The 1982 Agreement was followed by central recommendations in 1984, especially aimed at counteracting youth unemployment, and directed at the parties engaged in collective bargaining as well as at the government. Suggestions made by the Labour Foundation included an increase of jobs for young people, but also an intensification of employment policy in order to reach young people leaving all forms and levels of the educational system, and to decrease the number of long-term unemployed youth. The Foundation saw a number of possibilities for realising this, like the creation of extra jobs for young people (possibly even part-time), expansion of the apprenticeship system (doubling its capacity as compared with 1982), vocational training in enterprise or branch schools, introduction of out-of-school training places and the creation of so-called 'growth jobs' (jobs that would start on a part-time basis and gradually develop into full-time jobs). It is clear that the social partners here have obviously chosen the route indicated by the Wagner Commission, emphasising the apprenticeship system. The dual training model is regarded as a possibility to fight youth unemployment and - although less explicitly - also as an important way to improve the relationship between vocational education and the labour market.

In a letter to the governing board of the Labour Foundation, written in September 1984, the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment stated that the government supported the recommendations of the Foundation and was willing to do what was possible to contribute to their realization. The government demonstrated its willingness by changing a number of regulations and laws that could possibly create problems. One of these changes directly touched the apprenticeship

system. Traditionally in the Netherlands an apprenticeship contract was always linked to a labour contract, now the government made it possible under certain conditons (and only if the social partners agreed) to pay apprentices less than was legally required. Here again the state showed its new face, creating favourable conditions for social partners.

In May 1986 the government and the social partners in the Labour Foundation jointly expressed their aim to reduce the number of unemployed persons to 500,000 by 1990. This would mean a reduction by 200,000. A package of additional measures was accepted that included, amongs others, intensification of training activities, continuation of measures against youth unemployment, stimulation of employment of long-term unemployed and improved information systems with respect to unemployment and vacancies. The agreement reflects the concern for a sufficient supply of qualified labour and the growing problem of a 'hard core' of long-term unemployed. The government was closely involved in the preparation of the various agreements, also as a partner in its role of employer.

The agreed measures concerning retraining deserve some closer attention. The need for them was seen in the technological developments and changes in the distribution of work. Therefore stress was placed on retraining the existing working labour force. The retraining of unemployed people could 'be taken into consideration'. Proposals were made to organise retraining at the branch level, to develop a training programme for each branch and to coordinate activities from a central point. The costs of such programmes should basically be borne by the branch itself and special funds should therefore be developed at that level. For the training of unemployed people the state would contribute disproportionally, depending on the type of industrial branch. The Ministry of Education and Sciences would provide a number of facilities like buildings, material/equipment and teachers, at least for certain activities.

With respect to youth unemployment, a continuation and intensification of the measures of 1984 was recommended. The Foundation assumed that the government - as an employer - would contribute equally to reducing youth unemployment (the Ministry of

Internal Affairs has actually started a youth employment programme in order to stimulate the apprenticeship system in the public sector).

3.2.3. Present trends

From the above overview it has become clear that in the recommendations made at the central level, issues of training and retraining have received more and more prominence. There has also been an increased demand on the state to provide or to continue to provide the necessary facilities for realizing such recommendations. The special responsibility of the state for (long-term) unemployed people has continued to be stressed, as well as its role as an employer. It should be noted that no confirmation of previously agreed measures with respect to the shortening of working hours has been made.

As we have already stated, the social partners chose to explicitly follow the recommendation of the Wagner Commission favoring the apprenticeship system where initial vocational training was involved. The dual training model is regarded as a major opportunity to counter youth unemployment (especially in the opinion of the trade unions) and besides as an important means of strengthening the relation between vocational education and the labour market. The employers in particular undisputably recognize the meaning of the apprenticeship system and prefer it over other forms as initial vocational training. However, the most recent developments (summer 1987) indicate that continuation of the central agreements is increasingly becoming problematic. One of the core issues is that the trade unions are not seeing enough results in terms of more jobs and redistribution of employment in exchange for their years of maintaining a reticent attitude towards wage demands. Especially the unions affiliated to the confederation of unions threaten to make wage demands their first priority in the coming central negotiations. It is quite possible that this will act as a time-bomb with respect to everything that has been achieved by the social partners so far in educational matters.

3.3. Segments in the vocational education system and their relationship

Both in the domain of education and in industrial relations new initiatives have been taken at the national level. The question is where these two domains will meet and what the consequences will be for the structure and organization of the system of vocational education.
In order to clarify this, we will distinguish the major segments of the vocational training system and will briefly outline the shifts taking place, closely following a recent review paper by Van Hoof and Van Wieringen (1986). Our main focus will be on the relations between the three segments into which Dutch vocational education can be divided:

1) regular vocational education/the 'O & W' sector or segment financed by the Ministry of Education and Sciences;
2) industrial training facilities at branch or enterprise level, provided and financed by branch associations or individual companies;
3) intermediary labour market training/the 'SOZAWE' sector or segment financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment.

3.3.1. The three segments of vocational education and their interrelations; a central issue

The first segment of training facilities, also called regular education, generally speaking includes (vocational) training provided in schools at all levels: lower, senior, higher and university. One characteristic of this sector is that all forms of education are almost completely financed by the Ministry of Education and Sciences, regardless of religious or ideological persuasion. State schools (run by local or national authorities) and (non)denominational special schools (run by statutory bodies) both receive financial backing.

The second segment comprises privately funded industrial training at branch or enterprise level. Facilities are provided at branch level on behalf of companies, usually affiliated to or organized in a trade association or foundation, the training is financed by these companies. Single companies may also provide and fund their own training facilities to cover their specific training needs.

The final segment, intermediary labour market training, is largely dependent on the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SOZAWE) for financial resources. It consists of numerous facilities for in-service training and retraining as well as - at least partly - the practical component of the apprenticeship system; and especially involves training facilities within job provision policies. Important SOZAWE-facilities (besides the practical part of the apprenticeship system) include training in cooperation between government and industry (SOB), Centres for Craft Training for Adults (C(A)VV's) and Centres for Vocational Orientation and Practice (CBB's).

For the sake of completeness we should also mention the segment of private, non-subsidized courses, offered by commissioned or independent institutes. Some of these qualify for an officially recognized diploma. The courses are often correspondence courses, which may or may not be supported by oral instruction or demonstrations. Several institutes are entirely aimed at providing training 'on demand', their clients are usually companies. Recent newcomers to this market are schools for vocational education from the 'regular' sector, using their own know-how and equipment. A special law has recently formally enabled schools for higher vocational education to be active here, a law for senior secondary level vocational schools is in preparation. This development may be regarded as an expression of the way in which the government is trying to stimulate Dutch vocational education to become more market-oriented. Further amendments are being prepared to offer schools for vocational education opportunities for contract activities.

Training at branch and enterprise level and intermediary labour market training (segments 2 and 3) are much closer to the working world than regular vocational education (segment 1). The first segment is basically aimed at transferring general vocational qualifications, while the second and third segments often provide vital links between vocational education in schools and the multitude of company and job specific, continually changing demands for qualifications from the world of work.
This implies that the relation between the different segments within the total system, their interrelations and the determination of their boundaries form a major political issue (see also: Van Hoof and Van Wieringen, 1986).

3.3.2. Developments in vocational education

Most of the suggestions made by the Wagner Commission affect the first segment of vocational education especially. The recommendations of the Labour Foundation mainly refer to the second segment. The third segment really takes an intermediate position and is mentioned by both.
According to Van Hoof and Van Wieringen, a certain reorientation in educational policy has occurred since the Open Consultations (o.c.: 162-163). They note:

- more stress is being given to the relevance of vocational education for economic growth and for improving the functioning of the labour market;

- a new role of employers' organizations and unions in policy making and planning in vocational education;

- new programmes to adapt at least certain parts of vocational education to changes in industry (i.e. introduction of information technology in education);

- the introduction of privatization of education (more market orientation);

- more stress on educational policies by industry itself, both in individual enterprises and on the level of branches (second segment). Estimates of the VNO indicate that the total expenditure on industrial training in separate companies equals almost one third of the total budget of the O & W sector;

- attempts to revitalise training programmes for the labour market (third segment) and their extension with several forms of adult education into a comprehensive system of adult vocational education.

We can best analyse the changing role and position of the social partners in the course of these developments by looking at the various segments separately.

Developments in the first segment

In the segment of regular education one can observe the following tendencies:

- the decision making network now also includes the social partners at the central level, and new 'interfaces' between education and industry have been created for the planning and development of vocational training programmes;

- an increased market orientation of the educational system, especially in higher and medium level education. Local industry will have better access to educational facilities;

- a new mobilization of vocational education, especially through the introduction of information technologies.

Developments in the second segment

In this segment of industrial training courses one can observe:

- the search for possibilities to shift the financial costs of training and education to other parties than the enterprise itself (partial subvention of the practical component of apprenticeships by the government; reservation of part of the wage sum in collective agreements for training purposes);

- subcontracting training to other institutions and - as a result - a growth of the private training sector. Parts of the first and third segment are also moving in this direction;

- cooperation between enterprises to realize the organization and financing of vocational training, especially at the branch level. Recent research has shown that so far this development has not amounted to much except for the apprenticeship system (Bakkenist, Spits, 1986).

Developments in the third segment

In the segment of intermediate labour market training, developments occur with respect to:

- new administrative roles of the social partners: the department of employment facilities (a.o. including local employment offices) will be transferred from a department of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment to a tri-partite institution at national and local level. Direct control and responsibility for planning and administration of labour market training and retraining programmes will be shared with the social partners, who until recently only had advisory power;

- an expansion of this section as a result of the Ministry's involvement in financing the practical component of apprenticeships (BVJ measure), its cooperation with the Ministry of Education in basic vocational education for adults and its intended involvment in youth employment programmes.

3.4. Conclusions

In summarising the main developments one can see shifts towards less clear disinctions between the various segments. Also the influence of the social partners in the first and third segments is growing, while educational professionals are hardly represented in the development of the second and third segment. It is too early yet to assess the stability of these trends, especially as the role of educational representatives may still change. One is struck, however, by the degree of cooperation and consensus that appears to exist between social partners at the central level in questions concerning vocational education. Indeed, we can agree with the conclusion made by Van Hoof and Van Wieringen that a complex pattern of interorganizational regulations with a strong neo-corporatist character is developing.

CHAPTER 4 - THE IMPACT OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS ON BRANCH AND ENTERPRISE LEVELS

The national developments described in the previous chapter have led us to characterise the role of the social partners in vocational education as neo-corporatist. We have to see now, however, to which extent a transmission to lower levels takes place. We shall limit ourselves here to an analysis of developments at the lower levels of the industrial relations system.
We should stress that it would be wrong to consider all developments below the central level as results of national agreements. They can very well be relatively autonomous, and even the perception of such decentralising trends may have actually led to agreements at the central level. In this research it was not possible to make such a detailed analysis. The following observations should therefore be understood as first indicators of the character of the relations between these levels.

4.1. Collective Agreements made after the 1982 Agreement in the Labour Foundation

The 1982 Central Agreement contained a number of suggestions to redistribute employment without any additional costs for enterprises. It made it possible to exchange existing wage agreements for employment measures and to postpone the validity of the wage agreements until 1 October 1983 in order to make such negotiations possible. As mentioned before, the Central Agreement had the status of recommendations for CAO parties. Did the latter follow these recommendations?

In December 1982, 481 collective agreements had been registered, covering about 2,050,000 workers. For 320 of them (concerning about 1,741,000 people, i.e. 85 % of all persons covered) wage agreements were postponed, and in 83 of these cases no agreements could be reached (see Table 1).

Table 1 - Results of collective bargaining December 1982

Modality	Number of CAOs	Number of persons
no agreement	83	404,000 (23 %)
agreement	231	1,335,000 (77 %)
negotiations continued	6	2,000 -
total postponed	320	1,741,000 (100 %)

Source: SOZAWE, 1983

The above overview does indeed suggest a rather high degree of transmission of the central recommendations. More specifically, alternative destinations for wage agreements implied:

- a shorter working week and part-time jobs for young workers (in 11 CAOs, covering 501,000 people);

- employment of additional apprentices (in 8 CAOs, covering 419,800 people, also agreements were reached on numbers of training places);

- creation of training funds, mainly for young people but in some branches also for adult workers (in 13 CAOs, covering 556,700 people).

At the end of 1983, 41 CAOs (covering 836,681 persons) contained agreements about youth employment. These were mainly the 'big' CAOs that traditionally fulfil the role of forerunners.
At the end of 1985 there were 44 CAOs (878,000 people) and 28 'principal agreements' at CAO level (127,900 people) with regulations pertaining to the employment of youth (SOZAWE, 1985). In 58 cases (90,000 people) they contained substantial agreements. Again, these were mainly the 'big' CAOs. In Table 2 an overview is given of the nature of these measures.

Table 2 - Type of youth measures in 1985/86 CAOs

Nature of measures	1985/86 CAO's		1985/86 Principal agreements		Total	
	CAO	persons	CAO	persons	CAO	persons
1. apprenticeships	21	721,800	18	97,100	39	809,900
2. other work experience places	11	247,500	12	42,000	23	289,050
3. growth/part-time jobs	8	365,700	16	102,600	24	468,300
4. full-time jobs	7	19,700	2	3,000	9	22,700
5. others	-	-	12	28,100	12	28,100

Source: SOZAWE, 1985

N.B. In any CAO or principal agreement more than one measure can be included.

It is important to note that no agreements were made concerning retraining and further training of workers, except in a few enterprise-specific CAOs. As noted earlier, the Central Agreement has been followed especially by the more important CAOs.

4.2. Developments in three branches

To illustrate the role of social partners with respect to vocational education at sector level, we shall examine in more detail the situation and developments in three branches: metal- and electrotechnical engineering, building industry and banking. We

shall focus on the educational policies in these sectors for (beginning) skilled workers and employees.

4.2.1. Metal- and electrotechnical engineering industry

The metal sector is very large and the internal differentiation is so big that it does not make sense to talk about the sector as a whole. It comprises service and industrial enterprises. The service and repair part consists of eight branches: car and bicycle (repair), plumbing and fitting, heating, isolation, coachwork, gold and silver, electrotechnical and metal-working branches. Light engineering is easily confused with heavy industry (steel industry), but is completely different. Light engineering is a branch with many, most of them small, enterprises (about 8,000 with a total of approximately 70,000 workers), while heavy industry has a relatively small number of usually large enterprises (about 1,200 with 240,000 workers), where most of the important technological developments occur.

Heavy industry has a certain tradition in vocational training. Traditionally vocational training was done by individual enterprises that very often had their own (enterprise) school. Enterprises that were not actively engaged in training, even from other branches like metal-working, also made use of these training facilities by 'buying away' (beginning) craftsmen. Yet, another historical aspect is important for understanding the developments in the field of vocational education. After the Second World War heavy industry acted as an economic forerunner for a long time in many respects. Its industrial relations set the tone for the other sectors and its collective agreement was virtually decisive for the content of other CAOs. The same was true for vocational training: apprenticeship in heavy industry also acted as a model for others.
During the recent economic crisis training facilities in enterprises came under heavy perssure. The management looked very carefully at their costs, especially in view of the trained workers' change to non-training enterprises. In fact, many enterprise schools were

closed or closures were announced. As a consequence, vocational training in the metal industry was in danger of becoming a marginal affair. Until then the interest of the social partners in vocational education and training had been relatively small. This changed, however, in the wake of the economic crisis and the discussions about economic recovery. One began to realise that the neglect of vocational training would become a threat to the metal industry. It appeared to be important to guarantee a continuous influx of young qualified people. Moreover, it was thought that technological developments themselves would increase, or at least change, qualification requirements, also for the existing work force. Nevertheless, it was only in the beginning of the 1980s that the social partners started to play an active role in vocational education. For the first time their growing interest was reflected clearly in a framework paper called 'Employment and employment chances for young people in and outside industry'. In this paper a number of recommendations were made for a structural solution to be negotiated by the social partners at the branch level. Following the Labour Foundation's 1982 Agreement the employers and trade unions in heavy industry in 1983 agreed on a specific training CAO. Some of the points that were contained in this CAO were the following:

- Vocational training was given a structural financial basis. Trade unions accepted the non-payment of price compensation and the allocation of such monies towards a training and development fund for the metal and electrotechnical industry to subsidise primary vocational training.

- A number of regional training organizations were established, each administered by a joint board of employers and trade unions with the task of ensuring the existing training capacity in the enterprises and/or bringing this capacity back to the level of the 1970s. These organizations were granted the use of contributions from the previously mentioned training and development fund. The apprenticeship contract would no longer be concluded between the apprentice and an individual employer, but with such a regional organization.

- The legal position of an apprentice was adapted to his apprentice status. It was no longer necessary to conclude a training and employment contract. In future, the legal position of the apprentice (including remuneration) would be laid down in a training contract together with a declaration made by the organization that it would do everything within its power to place apprentices in one of the participating enterprises.

In 1986 and 1987 the sector contribution to the training and development fund was increased and further CAO agreements have been made to this purpose; the remuneration for apprentices in enterprise schools was increased and also retraining for work with technically advanced equipment is now covered by this fund (with support of the Ministry of Economic Affairs).
It is interesting to see that the social partners have decided to differentiate subsidies from the training and development fund to employers or regional training organizations according to the type of occupation (see also Appendix II). In view of future problems on the labour market, 'more expensive' training is granted more subsidy than 'cheaper' training courses.
All this indicates that employers and trade unions show a remarkable consensus in admininistering the fund and in deciding on vocational education. Further illustrations of this are the events around the negotiations about the reduction of working hours, which led to a protracted delay in concluding a new CAO in 1986, although agreement on vocational training policy was reached quickly. It should also be noted that the national body of the apprenticeship system, being the actual training organization, only marginally participates in the development of a vocational training policy in the metal- and electrotechnical industry.

The training and development fund not only receives contributions from industry but also subsidies from the Ministry of Socail Affairs and Employment (BVJ Measure). The Ministry's share in the fund, however, is relatively small: about two thirds of its financial needs are supplied by branch contributions. As such, this is an indication of the importance placed by the social partners on

vocational training, but also seems to be an important conditon for the further development of a genuine branch level policy with respect to vocational training.

The daily policy is made by the board of the training and development fund. Besides representatives of trade unions and employers, other institutions like the Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment act as observers. The basic lines for training policy are determined at CAO level, though usually on the basis of suggestions made by the training and development fund. Its board has an advising and preparatory role in matters of training and education for collective bargaining. The role of the national training body (SOM) is relatively small here and far smaller than for example in the building industry. There even appears to be some tension. The social partners criticise the national body for being too slow and not enough adapted to the actual needs of the enterprises. An important cause of these tensions seems to be the integration a few years ago of the previously separate apprenticeship systems for light engineering, heavy industry and Philips into one large apprenticeship system.

Regional organizations form the cornerstones of the branch's vocational training policy. The intention is that individual enterprises take care of vocational training and education under the responsibility of these regional organizations, who also conclude the apprenticeship contracts.

The regional organizations are governed by regional representatives of employers and trade unions together with individual enterprises, regional state authorities, local employment offices, centres for the vocational training of adults and the two major apprenticeship systems (SOM, VEV). At present there are seventeen of these regional organizations, covering practically the whole country. The two most important types of training activities organised by the regional organizations are the following:

- Participating enterprises place their training capacities at the disposal of the regional organization to ensure that training becomes less dependent on their individual economic situations. Three types of training facilities are offered: on-the-job

training (so-called C situation), learning corners (so-called B situation) or enterprise schools (so-called A situation). By also providing training and education for other enterprises in the region, enterprises with their own enterprise school are able to maintain their training capacity;

- Apprentices are trained under the direct responsibility of the regional organizations in branch schools and are given practical work experience in the local enterprises. Apprentices are trained in phases or blocks: periods in the training centres are followed by periods of practical experience in firms. This type of training is less important than the first one.

There is a clear preference for the first type: the involvement of enterprises is more intensive and consequently the survival chances of the regional training system are high. The involvement of enterprises is not only shown by their actual participation in the vocational training, but also by their representation in the governing board of the organization. The national apprenticeship body SOM is principally opposed to the A-situation, in which apprentices are trained completely outside the production process. The SOM argues that this is in conflict with the very specificity of the apprenticeship system, that is a combination of learning and working. In contrast, both employers' organizations and trade unions are very enthusiastic about this form of training. An important difference between the two types of vocational training is that in the former the participating enterprises have great control over recruitment, selection and placing of apprentices, while in the latter case this lies with the regional organization or the management of the regional training centre (for more details see Hövels and Verijdt, 1987).

To conclude, we should again emphasise the increasing importance being given to retraining in the metal and electrotechnical industry, as is also reflected by the attempt to allocate more and more funds from the training and development fund to this purpose. Recent statements by the chairman of the employers' organization in

the metal and electrotechnical sector (the FME) even indicate the endeavor to use the financial means of the fund almost entirely for company and job specific qualification (especially through in-service training and laying the responsibility for initial vocational training, particularly in the primary apprenticeship system, in government hands (Metaalelectroprofiel, september 1987). It is not yet clear to which extent these aims will be followed through, what the reaction of the trade unions will be and what the consequences will be for the new training structure in this sector. One problem with continuation and development opportunities is the close link to CAOs of relatively short duration (1 or 2 years), in which training is included as one element of a package of agreements on employment and working conditions.

4.2.2. The building industry

In the building industry usually a distinction is made between two large sectors: the construction of buildings and houses and the construction of infrastructures like roads, etc. These differ considerably and we shall limit ourselves in this analysis to the first sector. Although this sector can still be broken down into such fields as the construction of new buildings, maintenance, renovation and restauration, which to a certain extent differ in qualification requirements, the ways to obtain such qualifications are basically similar.
In the building industry much use is made of subcontracting and delivery of prefabricated parts by third parties. Besides skilled workers the industry therefore also employs many unskilled workers, and the building market is known for its open character. Links between workers and firms are not very strong: there is a very degree of labour fluctuation. For this reason the phenomenon of segmented labour markets has been known in the building industry for a long time: a stable hard core of workers, on the one hand, and a rather loose segment of marginal workers, on the other.
Despite the open character of the labour market, the level of unionization of workers is relatively high. It is estimated that at

present half of the workers are union members. In contrast to most other branches, union membership has even been growing.

In the building industry the apprenticeship system has traditionally been the most important educational route. There is a firm relation between the national apprenticeship body (SVB) and the training and development fund for the building industry. This fund has been in existence since 1977 and since 1983 has also functioned within the framework of the BVJ policy. To a large extent the national apprenticeship body prepares the training and education policies of the industry and makes proposals which are then taken over by the training and development fund.

The apprenticeship system is organised on a regional basis in four districts, each of them further subdivided into regional training commissions (ROC). At present there are 60 ROCs which are governed by representatives of employers, of the regional trade union organizations and of the central apprenticeship system itself (its regional consultant and possibly the head of the district). Also represented are the lower vocational schools and the regional employment office. It is the ROC's task to stimulate the development of the apprenticeship system in good mutual cooperation.

As in all other industrial branches, in the building industry the apprenticeship system is very sensitive to the economic situation. When during the 1970s employment in the building industry sharply decreased, this had immediate consequences on the system. Since employers were obliged to offer apprentices not only training but also an employment contract for the duration of the apprenticeship, the number of young people in training decreased dramatically. In order to maintain the training capacity, any risks for employers had to be reduced or eliminated completely.

Besides the social partners engaged in collective bargaining, also the national training body and the ROCs contributed to developing the practical component of apprenticeship. The core of the new policy is formed by regional associations for cooperation between employers or building firms, resulting from regional initiatives. Initial capital (for buying and renting so called apprentice workshops, see later) was also provided by the employers of the region. The association for cooperation assumes a legal entity which

guarantees the total length of the primary vocational education of the apprentices. On the basis of the collective agreement all apprentices in the region conclude a contract with such an association which also includes a declaration of intent for employment after finishing the apprenticeship. The association for cooperation therefore acts in place of the individual employer and takes on all the risks and burdens. Each association is connected with an apprentice workshop where new apprentices spend a period of six months for introduction and orientation. After that, vocational training is continued in individual training firms on the basis of a 32-hour labour contract. Individual firms can engage apprentice workers from the regional association for a certain period whenever it suits them (a kind of work pool), but even if they are not contracted the apprentice workers are paid by the joint association for cooperation.

The associations in turn are administered by representatives of the regional employers that are involved. Neither trade unions nor the training body are represented on these boards. They do take part, though, in so-called inspection commissions that control the development in and around apprentice workshops. Furthermore, there are provincial steering committees of a broader composition: employers, trade unions, regional civil servants and the national training body. These steering committees are responsible for improving cooperation between the associations in the region and with the ROC.

Every year the Economic Institute for the Building Industry prepares a long-term prognosis of employment. The social partners have agreed that 70 per cent of the estimated necessary training will take place within the framework of the associations for cooperation. The provincial steering committees distribute the number of apprenticeship places among the existing associations. The board of each association, however, has the right to decide how many young people and also which ones will anually be trained by them. It looks as if in 1986 the required number, 3,500 were placed in this way.

Both social partners seem to be reasonably satisfied with the functioning of this training system. Employers refer to the

following advantages: a better spread of training costs among firms; less administrative work for participating firms; a liberal subvention system that is administered at the central level; a quantitative match between the number of apprentices and the needs of the firms.
Also the trade unions are quite positive about the new approach. The quality of the training is - according to some spokesmen - no worse than the old system, in which apprentice training was done by individual employers (this system, by the way, still exists).
Although the market sensitivity of the apprenticeship system has not been eliminated completely, larger numbers of apprentices are now being trained. Through the creation of the employment pool it has been made possible to also employ apprentices for shorter periods of time in building firms, whenever there was a need for short labour contracts. The system, however, is still highly dependent on the willingness of individual firms to provide training and on the opportunities they offer to engage apprentice workers productively (HÖvels and Verijdt, 1987). One of the unmet desires of the trade unions with respect to the associations for cooperation refers to their recruitment policy. The ROC selects candidates for apprenticeship and nominates them to the associations, which then take the decision on who will be accepted. In practice, pupils with a lower technical school or MAVO diploma very often appear to miss the boat, or at least not to receive high priority. The ROCs try to place candidates with such diplomas with individual firms as apprentice workers, but they prefer to have each person accepted by an association for cooperation at least for the period of orientation. Up to now they have not yet been very successful, despite the possibilities offered by such orientation periods in apprentice workshops for preparatory training and for compensating any shortcomings in the apprentices' previous education.

As mentioned before, this type of training should cover 70 per cent of the estimated training needs. For the remaining 30 per cent various other possibilities exist.
Apprenticeship training, for example, also takes place outside the associations for cooperation, on the basis of apprentice work

contracts with individual employers. In addition, there is the short-MBO in vocational schools. For this type of full-time school education it is now becoming more and more difficult to find a sufficient number of practical training places, since employers have relatively easy access to temporary workers provided by the associations. In some places, therefore, short-MBO is using the apprentice workshops of the associations. As a matter of fact, employers consider short-MBO a superfluous training form created by the government, for which, especially at present, there is hardly any need. At the same time, however, pupils from short-MBO doing their practice period are welcomed by building firms because they are considerably cheaper than the apprentices employed within the framework of the apprenticeship system. The unions for their part see chances for this type of education, but rather as a kind of pre-education for apprentices. Other training possibilities in the building industry are offered by the centres for the vocational training of adults (CVVs), subsidised by the Ministry of Social Affairs and MBO schools. Graduates of MBO, if they find a job at the operational level, usually start at the bottom of the ladder and, depending on their capacities, sooner or later move toward higher functions. Young people who have finished LBO and are looking for a job in the building industry usually only find employment as trainees. LBO as such is not a sufficient basis for finding employment in the building trade. Yet, employers do show a considerable interest in young people with LBO diplomas. This seems to be more related, though, to the selection role of the school than to its educational and qualificational role. Young people who have successfully finished building trade education in LBO are supposed to have demonstrated that they have the right mental attitude for working in the industry and are worth receiving a further craft training. Lately, among the young people leaving primary education, lower technical schools have become far less attractive than secondary general education.

Despite the interest of employers in vocational education in lower technical schools, real involvement of the social partners with vocational training in this industry is basically restricted to the apprenticeship sytem. The unions argue that they do not have the

capacity in terms of time and people to become more intensively involved in other forms of education. They are, for example, not able to comment on the curricula for lower technical education although the Foundation for Curriculum Development (SLO) openly invites them to do so. The unions' involvement with MBO is equally limited and largely confined to their taking part in the governing boards of schools. Unions have not yet exerted any influence on the curricula of MBO. Usually the employers provide the job profiles from which the educational specialists develop the curricula. It is to be expected that the trade unions will also become involved in these activities, through their involvement in the BOTO's (chapter 3).

4.2.3. Banking

In the Netherlands there are 65 savings banks and 85 general banks. Together they have approximately 115,000 employees, of whom some 76,000 are employed with the four largest banks. There is one employers' organization that does not (yet) represent all the savings banks. The banks that are organized employ 90,000 people. The employers' organization acts as the bargaining partner on behalf of all the employers and the collective agreement is valid for all banks.

The banking industry has a very low level of unionization, only 7,900 employees are organized in one of the unions. A number of reasons account for this situation. Employees in banking and insurance occupy white collar jobs and their loyality towards their employer is quite strong, which is caused or even increased by fringe benefits such as cheap mortgages and insurances. In addition, the banking world at the local level is characterised by small offices and finally, and probably most importantly, the sector has been doing very well during the last two decades, which made it possible to meet material demands of employees without too many problems.

Education and traning are an important element in the career policies of the banking industry. One reason for this is the hierarchical organization of the firms. The level of unskilled or low skilled employees is practically non-existent; entry jobs are for school leavers with senior secondary general education (MAVO). The position in the organization and further career opportunities are basically determined by a person's completed education and training courses. Almost everybody follows an introduction course after statrting work with a bank, but also afterwards successfully completing training courses is a condition for promotion.
Since the sixties, technological developments and the growth of sevice provision have caused the training needs of banks to increase sharply. There is a strong increase in personnel in higher jobs at the expense of those in lower job categories. Automation has put a lot of pressure on the position of women especially in banking. Research in one big bank showed that women usually occupy lower jobs with few career perspectives. Women are also less eligible for in-service training (De Jong, 1985).
The following forms of vocational education are relevant for banking and insurance:

a) branch courses of the Dutch Institute for Banks and Stock Brokers (NIBE) and of the Foundation for Vocational Development in Assurance Companies (SVV);
b) internal enterprise courses of a number of large banks;
c) apprenticeship, organised by the national apprenticeship body for economic and aministrative jobs (ECABO);
d) senior and higher schools for economic and administrative education (MEAO/HEAO);
e) academic education.

We shall examine all but the last one.
ad a) In the banking and insurance industry, as is the case in the whole service sector, regular vocational education has developed very slowly. One reason for this is the existence of broad and important enterprise and branch-specific training opportunities. NIBE and SVV each year train many students in different aspects of the banking and insurance business. NIBE does not offer allround

vocational training, but instead a large number of courses that link up with the previous education of participants, ranging from MAVO to university. Courses are on a correspondence basis but are sometimes supported by oral instruction given by bank employees; they are paid for by the employers but take place in the participants' free time. NIBE courses are being more and more criticised for their insufficient adaption to real job profiles.

ad b) Company-specific training facilities are well developed in the banking industry but are mainly to be found in the large banks. Their existence can be explained basically by the needs of these banks for very company-specific courses, not only in terms of their typical way of servicing, but also in terms of enterprise culture. To give an indication of the scope and size of such enterprise courses: one bank with about 16,000 employees in 1985 organized more than 4,700 courses.
Company training is of course adapted to the needs of the bank concerned, but courses may be mutually exchanged because banking is a rather uniform business. In general, the circuit for company and branch training may be said to be well-regulated: relatively few (mostly larger) firms are involved who have managed to find each other in developing and exchanging courses for employees. The unions are hardly represented in this picture.

ad c) For the past few years there has also been an apprenticeship system. Following the 1982 Agreement in the Labour Foundation, the banking collective agreements of 1983 and 1984 included the intention to offer 500 young people a mixed trainee and work contract. The training would be organized by ECABO (the apprenticeship body for economic and aministrative jobs). Since up to 1983 there had been no experience with apprenticeships and also ECABO had not yet developed a bank-specific training scheme, the first apprenticeships were based on a slightly adapted existing form of training for administrative workers. In the meantime, ECABO has developed, in cooperation with experts from the banks, a new training scheme for commercial administrative employees in banks. This scheme was started in 1984. The theoretical part contains a

number of NIBE courses, turning the new scheme into a rather broad basic training for different functions within the local banking office. After the apprenticeship more job-specific courses or one of the bank-specific schemes can be followed.

ad d) With the exception of the previously mentioned training scheme, subsidised vocational education provides no specific bank training. Medium-level and higher-level economic and administrative schools offer some courses that could form a basis for a banking career and that could be linked up to further NIBE courses or enterprise schemes. Nevertheless, a working group from the banking industry a few years ago noticed a shortage of higher training capacity. One school for higher economic and administrative education (HEAO) reacted and together with a large bank and an insurance company developed a special course for this sector. The bank and the insurance company es[illegible]lished the job profile, contributed to the vocational prof[illegible] and provided didactical material. Moreover, the first lessons were given by employees of these two firms, while the school teachers temporarily turned into teacher trainees. It is the intention to have other schools start this course, supported by banks and insurance companies.

As mentioned before, the banking industry is known for its low level of unionization. In 1986 banking employees were able to conclude a collective agreement only with the unions for higher employees, excluding the unions of FNV and CNV. One of the issues at that time was the reduction of working hours and the desire expressed by employers that the additional leisure time should be dedicated to firm-oriented training activities. For that reason FNV and CNV refused to sign the collective agreement.
Finally, special attention was paid to automation developments in the banking CAO - a separate protocol was even drawn up. The contents point out the basic opportunities given by automation for exerting influence at the company level. The parties acknowledge the social aspects linked to the continual proces of automation and are consequently of the opinion that employers' organizations and works councils should be given a role in consultations on automation projects.

In banking the works council in particular seems to have some influence on training policies, especially in bigger banks where the works councils often have salaried trade union officials and a secretarial office at their disposal. The trade unions themselves have little influence.

4.2.4. Some conclusions

The description of the situation in these three sectors illustrated the differences in training policies well. To recall some of the most striking points: while in the metal and building industries training and education policy meets a considerable degree of consensus between the social partners, in the banking industry one can note a division between the trade unions, especially between the union for higher employees and the others as well as between employers and unions. Also with regard to the content of training there is hardly any involvement of the unions in the banking industry. Most typical of the banking industry is the growing importance of enterprise and branch-specific courses, especially influenced by fast automation and branch-specific needs for more commercial client-oriented jobs. However, in the metal industry too we see the growing importance of retraining and further education of the existing work force to be able to deal with technological and work organizational changes.

Differences between the metal industry and the building industry are manifest in the different roles of educational specialists in deciding on the structure of training policy. Both sectors have the development of their own branch-specific training structure in common. Only one similarly well-developed branch level education policy has so far been developed in the graphics industry. Research in this sector has shown that a basic condition for consensus between employers and trade unions over training policy was provided by the accepted closed shop system and the principle that craft training is a condition for employment in this sector (Kayzel, 1985). Both building and metal industry are increasingly confronted with problems of attracting a sufficient number of apprentices on the one

hand, while on the other they are developing more stringent selection criteria in their recruitment and placement policies. Trade unions have not yet developed effective counter-measures against this trend. The government, finally, is increasingly adopting a supporting role, especially through the provision of financial means.

4.3. Developments at the enterprise level

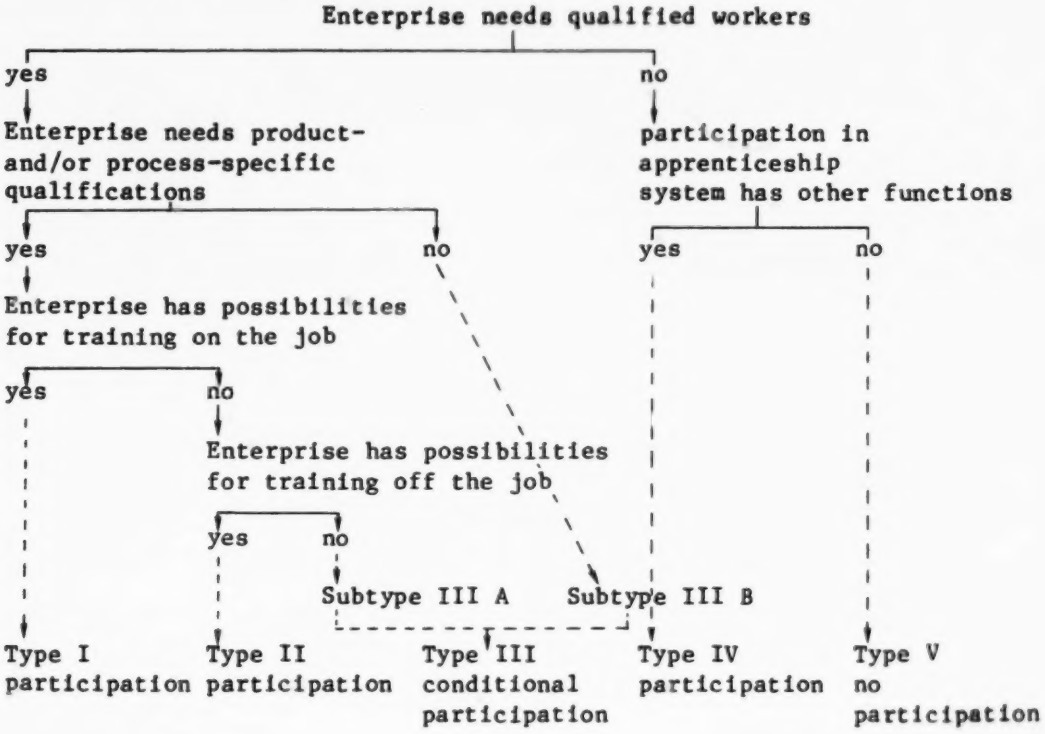
It is obvious that vocational policies are very much related to the organization of work at the enterprise level and to the entry jobs and further career possibilities created there. The organization of work is still the exclusive prerogative of employers. Despite the room created by the Law on the Works Councils, research into their functioning (Hövels and Nas, 1976; Looise and Heijing, 1986) does not give many indications that works councils actually exert any influence on the organization of work. This is equally the case for the trade unions, although there is not much empirical research available.

4.3.1. The training policy of individual companies

Some research has been done recently on the policies developed by enterprises towards the apprenticeship system, which suggests that enterprises tended to participate in the apprenticeship system only when they themselves felt a need for qualified labour (Hövels, 1985b). If this was not the case, there was no discussion about providing any practice or training places. One could speak in this respect of a necessary condition for enterprises. It has to be said, though, that this was the case until the beginning of the 1980s. Until that time an apprenticeship involved an apprenticeship contract between the apprentice and the individual enterprise and, linked with that, a work contract for which the collective agreement was valid, provided that the wage and training costs were covered by the training enterprise. We have already mentioned earlier that this

situation has been loosened gradually, by the separation of training and labour contracts and by lowering the wage level of apprentices. Besides this necessary condition there are a number of additional conditions to be fulfilled before individual enterprises can cover their needs for skilled labour through apprenticeships, since there are also other and cheaper ways to get skilled workers: such as employing them from the external labour market, taking on graduates from MBO of short-MBO, internal enterprise courses or training on the job. In Figure 1 we have summarised the most important additional conditions in a decision making typology.

Figure 1 - Decision-making typology for participation of enterprises in apprenticeship system



Source: Hövels, 1985

4.3.2. Decision makers at the level of individual companies

The management generally plays a dominant role in the decision making process with respect to the apprenticeship sysem (Hövels, 1985). In small organizations this is directly evident: the management - often the owners of the company - determines personnel and training policy, and also participation in the apprenticeship system. The decision making of small enterpreneurs often appear to show incrementalistic tendencies: often decisions are based ad hoc on actual situations with which the enterpreneur is confronted. In as far as small enterpreneurs are open to influences by third parties in their decision to participate in the apprenticeship system, this is mainly caused by the explicit need for training expressed by existing or new personnel. This may be based on having to comply with regulations for compulsory part-time education (for very young employees), perceived career perspectives and/or an educational orientation of those involved in a more general sense. Personnel expressing a need for participating in training courses through the apprenticeship system do not usually meet with resistance - not even in small organizations who do not perceive this need themselves. Usually training is provided on the condition that the schoolday is not paid and that no loss of production or service provision occurs. In larger companies decision making with respect to vocational training is usually less direct, as functional units within the organization are also involved. This is especially the case with personnel departments, industrial tutors and the production departments where trainee-employees are to be placed. Production departments - especially the heads of these departments - play a role within the frameworks for training policy defined by the company's management and/or training or personnel departments. They are able to exert influence in terms of the capacity for guidance they claim to have at their disposal. Sometimes their influence also stretches to the personnel structure of the department concerned. In some cases personal preferences of heads of production departments systematically prevent or stimulate the supply of trainee places.

There are few indicators of an active role in the decision making process played by works councils or trade union organizations. This fact is in shrill contrast with the current joint involvement of social partners with respect to training at the level of branches. In a broader sense there appear to be clear indications for a different type of involvement of employees and their representatives in cases of reorganizations linked to technological developments as opposed to innovations, where decisions with respect to the internal labour market are concerned (Warmerdam and Van den Berg, 1987). In cases of reorganizations in favour of technological developments, the involvement of works councils and trade unions is often considerable. It usually concerns the social aspects of reorganizations and has a legal basis in existing institutional regulations such as the Works Councils Act and - in some sectors - collective agreements. Besides, in some organizations, specific company regulations have been drawn up as a result of, among others, pressure by the works council or trade unions. Besides general rules for conduct, they also contain specific stipulations on various aspects of the internal labour market (internal recruitment, promotions, transfers, training). With respect to innovations the involvement of works councils and unions was rather small to begin with, but has increased during the past few years. In some companies this has led to specific regulations in the form of technology agreements, as a record of agreements made to deal with content and procedure when new technologies are introduced. Examples may be found in banking. The agreements lay down rules for the involvement of unions as well as works councils, especially with regard to social and organizational aspects, and contain, among others, stipulations on changes in jobs or job profiles, replacements and training. As yet, the formal lines of authority in organizations appear to reflect the interests of personnel more than officially recognized forms of participation (such as works councils). Especially large administrative organizations with large-scale and long lasting automation projects, have sizable participative structures (project organizations, joint management, user participation). Often, besides representatives of user departments, personnel mangers are closely involved in setting up and running

these projects and the project organization is designed so that consultation can be adjusted to consultation in participation bodies.

Against this background we can analyse the effects of the national and branch level policies. As described in earlier chapters, both aim at a substantial and structural increase in the number of practical training places in the apprenticeship system. The three central policy aims are: increase the number of apprentices, a training system less sensitive to economic changes, and a good match between vocational training and the labour market.

The further development of this policy was basically left to the consultations between trade unions and employers' organizations at the branch level and more specifically to the branch level training funds. By and large, it is possible to make a distinction between sectors where training policy is basically in the hands of individual enterprises, and sectors where intermediary legal entities have been created in between the individual company and the branch level (often at regional level and jointly managed by employers and employees). It seems that the relative autonomy of employers at the enterprise level, also with respect to their training policy, is still largely intact. Collective agreements merely provide a number of additional stimuli. Yet, the linkage of individual enterprises with the policies agreed upon at the branch level still remains the decisive point. Whenever conditions allow this, enterprises appear to make use of possibilities to reduce their risks.

4.4. Conclusions

It is clear that the field of vocational training and education is very complex and developments are different for each sector. This first analysis nevertheless leads us to a number of preliminary conclusions:

- There is a considerable degree of transmission from the national level to the level of the branch and collective agreements;

- It is difficult to isolate exactly the mechanisms that play a role here. One can reasonably assume that a combination of factors is relevant: the introduction of vocational training as a not (yet) politicized element in the system of industrial relations; the general climate of pragmatic realism primarily aimed at economic recovery; the ruling human capital approach towards vocational education, followed by both employers' organizations and trade unions; the weakened position of the trade union movement and its willingness to combine agreements for a redistribution of work with arrangements for vocational education; securing key positions in decision making about vocational education (especially in the case of the trade unions); and - through financial support - consensus stimulating role of the state;

- The various sectors show a clear tendency towards sector or branch-specific training policies. This is in accordance with the different role played by the social partners within the sectors;

- One of the differences between the sectoral training policies lies in the option to have training provided either by individual employers or by newly created bodies at branch and/or regional level;

- One striking feature is the fact that, up to now, social partners have focussed on the quantitative and organizational aspects of vocational training. The quality of training has hardly been an important subject in actual discussions between social partners or their policies;

- The autonomy of the individual enterprises with respect to the organization of work and qualifications can not be reduced by agreements and regulations at higher levels. There is nothing to indicate a substantial influence of unions or workers' representatives at enterprise level;

- Against the background of technological and economical developments the need for systematic research into the relations between organization of work, qualifications and control in the enterprise is becoming urgent.

CHAPTER 5 - SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In Chapter 3 we have described developments at national level with respect to the social partners' role in vocational education. We have located major events in the traditional decision making structures in vocational education in the work of the Wagner Commission, and in industrial relations in the Central Agreement of the Labour Foundation concluded in 1982. In Chapter 4 we have analysed the role of the social partners at branch and enterprise levels, primarily to find out about the transmission mechanisms that play a role between central and lower levels.
The resulting picture is a complex one. In this final chapter we will therefore try to structure our findings. We shall first return to the neo-corporatist model developed in Chapter 2 and then point at a number of conflict areas existing with respect to issues of vocational training and education. These two aspects provide the framework for future prospects for the social dialogue between the social partners.

5.1. Neo-corporatist tendencies?

We started this study with the question as to what extent the relations between the social partners around vocational training and education can be understood in terms of the neo-corporatist model. Although the nature of our study forces us to be careful not to jump to conclusions, we can use this question to order some of our findings in a more systematic way. We shall first present a number of developments at central level (points 1-10) and after that we shall point at some trends at lower levels (points 11-15), where we shall concentrate especially on the transmission between those levels.

1. The continuation of existing neo-corporatist institutions at the central level

Although at the beginning of the 1970s the crisis of the SER and Labour Foundation as neo-corporatist institutions of the industrial relations system was widely discussed, both bodies are still alive. The SER has never been fundamentally revised or changed, but does not play a prominent role in policy development concerning vocational education. The role of the Labour Foundation, the institution for consultation between central organizations of trade unions, employers and the government, has been very relevant. This was manifested especially by the three central agreements that have been concluded since 1982 and by their relevance for vocational education.
In the traditional decision making bodies for education, the national education organizations still play a prominent role in the consultations with the Ministry of Education and Sciences. This is certainly the case for the segment of vocational education which is fully subsidised by this Ministry. The educational organizations are the main, and until recently also the only participants in the institutionalised consultation structure about educational matters. Since 1985, the social partners have at least been given access.

2. The rise of direct technocratic advising

Besides the already existing neo-corporatist institutions, since the 1970s another type of advisory bodies of a more technocratic nature has been developed. One example is the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), which has not been mentioned in this report so far, but whose report on elementary education of 1986 had a considerable impact on the discussions about the future of education for the 15- to 16-year age group. Another example of these technocratic advisory bodies is the Wagner Commission. Given Dutch traditions, this commission has addressed the government in a remarkably straightforward way with a clear selection of strategic advice for a policy of re-industraliaztion. Its advice included proposals on vocational training and education that we have

described earlier in detail. These bodies operate without involving the existing interest groups, they do their work behind closed doors and develop necessary contacts with industry and trade unions in an informal way. Commissions like the one chaired by Mr. Wagner are organised on the basis of personal authority and expertise. Some observers regard the Wagner Commission as a model of future advisory bodies for the government (Van Doorn, 3 February 1983).

3. Corporatization of technocratic consultation

As we have described before, the advice produced by the Wagner Commission led to a period of - government initiated and sanctioned - open consultation about vocational education between industry, trade unions, state and educational organizations. There are, however, also signs that the Wagner Commission had informal contacts with the social partners before publishing its recommendations, indicating that old and new institutions are not completely separated.
We have also shown that the Wagner Commission's proposals have been a continuous source of inspiration for the central agreements concluded since 1982 in the Labour Foundation. These agreements have stimulated a more intensive involvement of industry and unions with vocational education.

4. Access of social partners to decision making circuits with respect to education

Stimulated by the consultations following the Wagner Commission, the social partners gained access to the traditional decision making bodies for vocational education. Along with the national organizations representing the educational field, they now participate in the talks with the Ministry of Education and Sciences, and new structures have even been established.
In exchange, trade and industry promised to do everything in its power to make work experience and apprenticeship places available. The umbrella organizations agreed to this, among others because of the threat that otherwise separate advisory links would be

established between industry and the Ministry of Education which would not include the educational field.
Furthermore we should point out the coming structuring of negotiations per sector between education and social partners, which will formalize the influence of the last mentioned group on vocational training profiles. Remarkably, the reverse has not occured: existing dicision making stuctures for the socio-economic field (i.e. industrial relations) remain the exclusive domain of employers' organizations and unions, even if vocational education is included in agreements made there. Although such agreements are usually limited to the segment of industrial training and the SOZAWE-segment, but their impact on the relation between these segments on the one hand and the O & W segment on the other is considerable.

5. Decentralisation within the trade unions

Since the departure from a central wage policy the position of the central confederations vis-à-vis the larger trade unions has weakened considerably. Trade unions organised on the basis of branch and sector, have begun to develop their own policies without bothering too much about the confederations. With this development one of the supporting mechanisms of a flexible transmission (a centralised trade union movement) has gradually lost its meaning.

6. Integration and professionalization of the employers' organizations

At the same time within the employers' organizations, especially VNO, strong internal coordination and professionalization has taken place. This is partially the result of a reaction to the politicization and radicalization inside the trade union movement at the beginning of the 1970s. The VNO leadership is now in a position to act forcefully at central level, also on behalf of the big employers.

7. Changes in the power relations between trade union and employers' organizations

Decentralisation within the trade unions and integration within the employers' organizations have weakened the position of the trade unions vis-à vis the employers' organizations at central level. This is even reinforced by the deterioration of the labour market situation.

8. The socio-economic crisis as a background for consensus between the social partners on the central level

The Central Agreement concluded in the Labour Foundation in 1982 was the first of its kind for a very long time, and it can be interpreted in terms of a barter: the recommendations to CAO parties included abandonning wage agreements in exchange for measures aimed at a redistribution of employment. It is obvious that the socioeconomic crisis formed an important impulse for the conclusion of the agreement. Also the wish to keep the government at a distance was a major motive.

9. Appeasement through vocational training

The Central Agreement offered a number of alternative measures for the redistribution of employment: the reduction of working hours, part-time work, counteracting youth employment. In the follow-up agreements, however, educational policy became more and more the central issue, first within the framework of youth unemployment but later also for retraining and further education of adults. Educational policy can therefore be considered as a basis for the maintenance of the fragile 1982 Agreement. The field of vocational training and education is relatively new in central level bargaining and not yet completely politicised. Parties share the view that it is an important instrument both in view of economic recovery and for the redistribution of employment. There is no such consensus with respect to the issue of shorter working hours.

10. The reluctant role of the state: financial support and privatization

In industrial relations the state has stepped back. It refrains from direct intervention but supports central agreements and consensus between the social partners in the field of vocational education, especially through subsidies. This is the case for the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, which at the same time is also engaged in a major privatization move. Also the Ministry of Education and Sciences is initiating developments in its segment of vocational education towards decentralisation and privatization. Following the recommendations of the open consultations, it has also admitted employers and trade unions to the decision-making bodies for education. The popular slogan at the moment is 'joint reponsibility for vocational education'. It is of course realised that the dual vocational training model, which is considered to be the most attractive one, can not be realized without the support of the social partners and certainly not without the commitment of employers who, in the end, have to provide the practical training places.

11. Central bargaining and collective agreements

Central agreements only have the status of recommendations to the parties involved in collective bargaining. Nevertheless, we have noted a high degree of implementation of such central agreements since 1982. Especially the CAO agreements on vocational education are very much in line with central recommendations. Yet the transmission clearly appears to be of a partial nature: it mainly concerns the bigger CAO's and the larger companies. It is not easily possible to say anything about the actual transmission mechanisms that have played a role. Probably the very conditions relevant for the negotiations at the central level play a role at the lower levels as well. In addition, it is the state that, through specific financial measures, creates the conditions for reaching this type of agreements.

Given the internal relations within both the trade unions and the

employers' organizations one can, however, assume that probably the parties at the central level have also been influenced by the lower levels. Rather than a top-down transmission, the existence of two-way traffic between the level of collective agreements and the level of negotiations in the Labour Foundation is indicated. Furthermore the homogeneity of a certain sector or branch should be taken into account.

12. Collective agreements follow the central agreements but there are fundamental differences between branches

Although many collective agreements follow the intention of the central recommendations, there are still major differences between branches with respect to their further elaboration. There is a clear tendency towards genuine branch-specific educational policies, although particularly in the case of training within the apprenticeship system. This is illustrated most clearly by the different policy models developed to stimulate the practical component of the apprenticeship system in the different industrial branches. In some branches it has been separated and disconnected from the individual enterprises, while in others endeavors towards integration have continued. The metal industry and to a certain extent the building industry are examples of the first type, while the banking industry is going in the direction of the second type instead.

13. The CAO level and the relative autonomy of individual enterprises

The autonomy of individual enterprises with respect to their training and education policy is not affected by agreements made in collective bargaining. CAO agreements merely provide facilities which may or may not be used. Also within the enterprise there are no indications of any influence of workers or their representatives on educational policies. Only in banking the works council has a role, but the position of the trade unions is very weak in this sector. At the level of individual companies, the relation between the organization of work, qualifications and participation in management is practically virgin territory.

14. Open Consultations and agreements on the sector level

The period of Open Consultations has led to a number of agreements about the involvement of the social partners on the level of sector (combinations of educational sectors and branches) in the development of job profiles, training profiles and curricula for vocational training and education. Special structures had been created for that purpose. The social partners now also have a position at decentral level in the segment of education which is subsidised by the Ministry of Education. It is too early, yet, and there is too little experience to make any firm evaluations. It is obvious, though, that the choices existing in the whole process of curricula development create challenges for the social dialogue between the social partners. The most crucial issue to be fought over in the near future will certainly be the relationship between the organization of work within enterprises and the structure of qualifications.

15. Ministry of Education and Sciences and individual schools

Typical of the educational segment subsidised by the Ministry of Education are its principally centralistic administration by the Ministry and its consulting bodies. It has been indicated earlier that the Ministry's policy, especially with regard to MBO and HBO, contains some elements of privatization, while similar developments are also taking place for short MBO and the apprenticeship system. It is reasonable to assume that this policy will lead to a commercialization of schools and to closer contacts between individual schools and enterprises. We have already seen the first signs of such progress in our research. These developments are also too recent to be able to make any statements as to their direction. One may expect, however, that such developments will meet with similar ones in the other educational segments, any may eventually lead to a diversified number of uncontrolled networks between education and industry on the level of regional an local educational facilities.

5.2. Conflict areas in the social dialogue

There is no discussion between the social partners about the need for vocational qualifications. There is a lot of discussion, however, on how to implement this need in vocational training and education. How should vocational education be structured in terms of the best possible balance between the various segments; and within the segments, between the various types of training and education? What should the varous segments and facilities look like in terms of content, form and quantity? What should their sources of financing be? In discussing such and similar questions and in the translation into policy, the character of the social dialogue between those involved is decisive. Will this dialogue be more or less harmonious, or will it be dominated by certain specific strategies? We can only point at a number of aspects which play a role in this respect and which indicate potential sources of conflict.

The principal question, of course, is who the participants in this social dialogue should be. In this study we have mainly paid attention to the parties that take part in the traditional decision making bodies of vocational education and industrial relations. It is important to note that these organizations are officially admitted to these circles. The groups which are not, or not very well organised, or that are not admitted to the regular decision making bodies, have therefore remained outside the picture. Their definition of problems and their problem-solving strategies in practice hardly reach the political agenda, despite the fact that very often they are the ones who are the immediate objects of policy making. For the Dutch situation we can refer especially to the position of women, young workers and the unemployed.

Another principal question refers to the angle from which the different participants in the social dialogue define problems of vocational education and articulate problem-solving strategies. It is obvious that vocational training and education is discussed at present against the background of developments on the labour market and in the employment system, and especially in relationship to technological and organizational changes taking place in enterprises. It is quite clear that the position of the participants

in the social dialogue is determined by their position as representatives of very definite interest groups in society. Depending on their societal positions, parties will define problems in the relationship between education and the labour market in terms of problems of absorption, utilisation, distribution, or as problems of providing the employment system with the reguired qualifications and people (see for a further eleboration of this distinction Hövels, in Peschar and Wesseling, eds., 1985). The degree to which these different visions are articulated depends heavily on the nature of the relations between the parties. These hve been described in the previous paragraph. It is our impression that the social dialogue in the Netherlands of the past ten years has been dominated almost exclusively by a definition of problems in terms of supply of qualification and personnel. Future developments and changes in the relations between the participants may well change this and consequently also the nature of the social dialogue.

We should like to conclude this report by pointing at a number of conflict areas which are determined by the present structure and character of the social dialogue on vocational education.

1. Until now there has been more attention paid to the quantitative aspect of vocational education than to its qualitative dimensions. Under the heading of qualitative improvement, curriculum developers, national training bodies and associations such as the one for senior secondary technical education (VMTS) are working on job profiles, modifying learning materials, in-service training for teachers etc. The social partners have hardly been involved in this so far. The development of ideas seems to be at an elementary stage still, one of the main reasons is a lack of tradition and capacity and expertise problems within the trade union movement.

2. The structural participation of social partners in the decision making of the Ministry of Education, excluding educational organizations, may involve risks for the relative autonomy of the educational system in relation to industry. It may be true

that the pedagogical domain which vocational education was until recently (excepting the apprenticeship system) has become more accessible - both to and for the world of work. The issue of optimalization of the relation between isolation and vocationalism remains. On the one hand solutions will be found in the balance of power between the still not unimportant educational field and the world of work, on the other in opportunities for realizing the options favoured by the social partners (and still to be developed) with respect to vocational education.

3. The institutionalized participation of the social partners at the sector level in decision making on job profiles, training profiles and curricula contains a series of moments where choices will have to be made, all constituting potential sources of conflict. The most crucial question seems to be how to translate the job profiles developed for a certain sector into vocational training profiles or course contents. To which degree is current occupational practice the only relevant criterion, how far can future developments in occupational practice be anticipated and - perhaps the most essential issue for the course of social dialogue - to which extent is it possible to anticipate desirable forms for the organization of work and consequent qualification demands? It is clear that besides the definition of the concept of occupation, the issue of the scope of job profiles and developments in this respect will become decisive elements in the final design of vocational training. In this respect, we should also point out the problem of cross-sectoral occupations and the need for inter-sectoral communication between the social partners.

4. The discussion about school versus dual forms of vocational education, for example, will sooner or later be confronted with tensions between the production and use of qualifications. Technological and organizational developments in the labour system do not only lead to major changes in qualification profiles for skilled workers, resulting in specific patterns of

occupational and company specific qualification elements. At the same time they may cause the production process to be designed in such a way that conditions for acquiring qualifications 'on the job' deteriorate. It is not clear to which extent the current focus on dualizing vocational education is in harmony with these developments or instead will lead to tendencies of more academic training. This is particularly relevant in view of the fact that education in schools still pre-eminently belongs to the domain of the Ministry of Education and the educational field as opposed to dual training routes which are the social partners' concern. The development of training facilities to substitute or complement work experience within so-called intermediary cooperative associations may be regarded as one of the symptoms of this area of conflict. This is also true for recent discussions on whether or not the appenticeship system should be linked to the announced sector schools for MBO.

5. The increasing flexibilization and segmentation of the labour market will have consequences for the discussion about the relationship between a broader job or occupation-oriented education on the one hand, and enterprise-specific training on the other. The interests of the trade union movement seem to lie primarily in deepening and broadening the occupational qualifications of their current and future (potential) members, as well as retraining and strengthening their bargaining postion, among others by controlling the access to those segments of the labour market which are relevant to them. A job and occupation oriented training system can be considered to be one of the basic conditions.
   The interests of employers appear to be primarily defined in terms of directly being able to use people in the production process of actual companies. Important prerequisites are forms of acquiring qualifications which are directly oriented towards practice and are company specific where possible. Enterprise

training courses are clearly on the rise: at a rough estimate the number of participants between 1983 and 1986 has doubled (SOZAWE, 1987). Not only the structure and design of vocational training courses will have to become subjects of debate in view of this area of tension, their contents will also have to taken into account.

6. Decision making and control of the intermediate structures that are developing between the educational sector subsidised by the Ministry of Education and the employment system are not yet clearly settled. Gradually a multitude of educational facilities has come into existence, not only within the framework of the transition from education to the world of work but also within vocational education for adults (employees as well as the unemployed). In this respect some people even refer to the design of a linking system between regular education and the regular labour system. If such a linking system is actually developing, one of its core issues is the one concerning the distribution of authority and participation.

7. New distribution problems are arising concerning

- the financial sources for vocational education in relation to the question about the 'winners' and 'losers' of changes in vocational education;

- the labour market position of the different segments and lines of vocational education and training;

- the selective access opportunities to the various educational segments and the labour market.

5.3. Concluding remark

In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Education and Sciences together with the educational field monopolized the way in which vocational education was organized. The involvement of the social partners was only found in the 'covert agendas' of the actors in the formal decision making circuit and occasionally and ad hoc through representation in managing boards for schools for vocational education and so on.

An exception is the apprenticeship system, traditionally belonging to the domain of the social partners and - in the fianl analysis - dominated by employers at the level of individual companies. One involvement of the social partners in (the rest of) vocational education was not formally institutionalized until the beginning of the eighties, when structures were created to this purpose at both central and branch level. At central level particularly by participation in two important advisory bodies, at structural level especially through structuring negotiations per branch between education and industrial life with repsect to all of vocational education. At the same time agreements are made within CAO's, explicitly concerned with providing initial vocational training and in service training, but limited to the scope of the traditional objects of bargaining i.e. working conditions and employment, as elements of an internally coherent package of agreements, their duration limited to that of a CAO. This linking means that the policy of social partners with regard to initial and in-service training is of a temporary nature. Even now the durability of the facilities that have been created as a result, manifested at regional levels, is uncertain.

Our study has given indications that a very complex interorganizational network is developing in the field of vocational education that has clear neo-corporatist traits. To some extent this fits quite well in the traditional pattern of Dutch institutions. New, however, is the merging of two domains, each already previously organised separately along neo-corporatist lines, into an integrated institutional system. Given the relevance of vocational education

for the employment system it can hardly come as a surprise that in this system the social partners are dominant and that it has taken over principal characteristics of the industrial relations system. This the more so since vocational training has become an issue of collective bargaining. It should not be forgotten, however, that the position of the educational field and umbrella organizations repectively is still very strong, especially in the O & W segment. Finally, it seems important to point out the fact that at the level of companies, the trade unions have hardly any influence, which may have major consequences for their grip on the educational system. The increasing focus on dual forms of training and the growing relevance of in-service training and retraining in the form of enterprise-specific courses only highlights this fact. This is the current situation but the system may develop further. Most of the developments are very recent and do not yet allow definite conclusions.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AWV Algemene Werkgevers Vereniging
General Organization of Employers

BIZA Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken
Ministry of Internal Affairs

BOTO Branche Overleg Technisch Onderwijs
Branch-level Consultation for Technical Education

BVJ Bijdrageregeling Vakopleiding Jeugdigen
Contribution Measure for the Craft Training of Young People

CAO Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst
Collective Labour Agreement

CBB Centrum voor Beroepsoriëntatie en Beroepspraktijk
Centre for Vocational Orientation and Practice

CCOO Centrale Commissie voor Onderwijsoverleg
Central Commission for Educational Consultation

CNV Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond
Christian National Federation of Trade Unions

COLO Centraal Orgaan van de Landelijke Opleidingsorganen
Central Affiliation of National Apprenticeship Bodies

C(A)VV Centrum voor de Administratieve Vakopleiding voor Volwassenen
Centre for Administrative Craft Training of Adults

CWV Centrale Werkgeversvereniging
Central Society of Employers

DCA Dienst Collectieve Arbeidsvoorwaarden
Collective Labour Agreements Service

ECABO Stichting Economische en Administratieve Beroepen
National Apprenticeship Body for Economic and Administrative Jobs

ECOZA Ministerie van Economische Zaken
Ministery for Economic Affairs

EIB Economisch Instituut van de Bouwnijverheid
Economic Institute for the Building Industry

FNV Federatie van Nederlandse Vakverenigingen
Federation of Dutch Trade Unions

GAB Gewestelijk Arbeidsbureau
Regional Labour Exchange/employment offices

GOA Gemeenschappelijk Opleidingsactiviteit
Joint Training Activity

HAVO Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs
Higher Secundary General Education

HBO Hoger Beroeps onderwijs
Higher Vocational Education

HEAO Hoger Economisch en Administratief Onderwijs
Higher Economic and Administrative Education

ITS Instituut voor Toegepaste Sociale wetenschappen
Institute for Social and Behavioural Studies

KMBO Kort Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs
Short Senior Secondary Vocational Education

KNOV Koninklijke Nederlandse Ondernemersvereniging
Royal Dutch Society for Employers

LBO Lager Beroepsonderwijs
Lower Vocational Education

LOK Leerovereenkomst
Training Agreement

LTS Lagere Technische School
Lower Technical School

MAVO Middelbaar Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs
Senior secondary General Education

MBO Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs
Senior Vocational Education

MEAO Middelbaar Economisch en Administratief Onderwijs
Senior Economic and Administrative Education

MTS Middelbaar Technische School
Senior Technical School

NCW Nederlands Christelijke Werkgeversvereniging
Dutch Christian Employers Federation

NIBE Nederlands Instituut voor het Bank- en Effectenbedrijf
Netherlands Institute for Bankers and Stockbrakers

OOVO Overlegorgaan Voortgezet Onderwijs
Consultation Body for Secondary Education

OR Ondernemingsraad
Works Council (enterprise level)

OSA Organisatie van Strategisch Arbeidsmarktonderzoek
Organisation for Strategic Labour Market Studies

O&W Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen
Ministry for Education and Sciences

PCBB Pedagogisch Centrum Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven
Pedagogic Centre for Vocational Education and Industry

ROC Regionale Opleidingscommissie
Regional Training Commission

ROM Raad van Overleg in de Metaal
Consultation Council for the Metal Industry

SER Sociaal Economisch Raad
Sozial Economic Council

SLO Stichting voor de Leerplanontwikkeling
Foundation for Curriculum Development

SOB Scholing in samenwerking tussen Overheid en Bedrijfsleven
Training in Cooperation between Government and Industry

SOM Stichting Opleidingen Metaal
Nationaal Apprenticeship Body for the Metal Industry

SOTO Sectoroverleg Technisch Onderwijs
Sector level Consultation for Technical Education

SOZAWE Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid
Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment

SVB Stichting Vakopleiding Bouwbedrijf
National Apprenticeship Body for the Building Industry

SVV Stichting Vakontwikkeling Verzekeringsbedrijf
Foundation for the Development of Vocational Education in the Insurance Business

VEV Vereniging tot Bevordering van Elektrotechnisch Onderwijs
National Apprenticeship Body for Electrotechnical Education

VMTS Vereniging voor Middelbaar Technische Scholen
Society for Senior Technical Schools

VNO Verbond van Nederlandse Ondernemingen
Federation of Dutch Industry

WRR Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid
Scientific Council for Government Policy

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